

# Maclean's

Canada's Weekly Newsmagazine

January 17, 2000

## HOSPITALS

Michael Decter dissects  
the causes of the crisis

## THE CBC

Why Bob Rabinovitch  
said No to the CRTC

# All in The Family



For more than  
two million Canadians,  
taking care of aging  
relatives is a heartbreaking  
struggle—and a  
national disgrace

Alzheimer's,  
the fastest-growing  
affliction,  
has overwhelmed  
the health-care system

\$4.50



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## How

### Patrick discovered the benefit of e-commerce.



With over 300 stores across the country, Zellers is one of the most successful retailers in Canada. But recognizing the importance of the World Wide Web, Zellers saw the potential for an e-commerce solution that would give even more Canadians access to its products and Club Z rewards.

With Microsoft technology, Zellers created a variety of integrated e-commerce sites - inexpensively and quickly, using their existing infrastructure - to target their consumers by lifestyle groups.

Zellers saw a great opportunity to beat the competition to market with an online baby boutique but needed to act quickly. There was no time for error or experimentation. Working in-house, Zellers chose to proceed with a trusted and reliable platform - Microsoft® BackOffice® Server. BackOffice provided Zellers with a platform that could be deployed rapidly and was capable of matching the growth of the site.

Zellers also decided to use Microsoft FrontPage to help them create an eye-catching Web site. FrontPage gave Baby Online a consistent and memorable look as well as a site that was customer friendly.

Over the past six decades, Zellers' clientele have come to expect a high level of customer service. They needed technology to provide their customers with high-speed access and impenetrable security. In Microsoft SQL Server™, Zellers found a database management system that not only gave Baby Online the level of security they required, it also provided them with built-in data replication functions, robust management tools and full Internet integration.

By combining Microsoft technology, Zellers has created a site that is easy to use and appeals to a broad range of customers with varied levels of Web shopping know-how. Shoppers can now choose merchandise based on brand and price. They can also use the site to redeem their Club Z loyalty points. And, Baby Online lets people who do not live close to a store benefit from Zellers' top quality merchandise and great customer service.

That's why Patrick is jumping for joy. Zellers' Baby Online Catalogue has become Canada's premier destination for infant products.

The Baby Online Catalogue lets Patrick's busy mom shop online for a wide range of products, with money or Club Z points, all without the inconvenience of leaving home. So they can both concentrate on more important things.

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# This Week

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Link: [www.macleans.ca](http://www.macleans.ca)



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Customers stacked up on Brad Moringgins's supplies—just in case. But after the Y2K panic, companies are shifting their focus, and their spending, to other projects



## Editor

## A modest proposal for the ER crisis

A California health-care company thought it had a great idea: set up a call centre where people confronting medical emergencies could get instructions on what to do next—if, say, Johnny fell and bumped his head. Private hospitals would subscribe to the service for a fee, as a way of increasing their traffic. Trouble was, the experts on call were able to handle most of the emergencies on the telephone. An unrelated study by Blue Cross in the United States confirmed the same: fully 80 per cent of people who called advice lines did not in fact end up going to the hospital. Nurses on the other end of the line were able to reassure them.

Call lines clearly could be an important part of the solution to the current crisis facing Canadians with medical emergencies. Across the country this flu season, patients are being turned away from ERs, or told to go to another hospital. Some, sadly, have not survived the process. Early last month, a 69-year-old man died of a heart attack in Weyburn, Sask., having waited in vain for 39 hours to get into a hospital in Regina, where the beds were occupied.

The truth is, people who really have

emergencies are being turned away because the majority of the people in ER do not need to be there at all. A recent Toronto District Health Council study found that, of some one million ER visits, only 200,000 qualified as true medical emergencies.

The problem is, in the middle of the night when your child has a high fever, or severe pain wracks your body, there is nowhere else to turn. Most doctors' offices operate on a 9 to 5 schedule, and their answering services invite people to take their after-hours problems to the nearest hospital. And, given cutbacks of staff and resources—and the tragic lack of home care—hospitals are reeling with people who should be treated elsewhere. People can't get into emergency because the beds often are full of people who are out of danger and waiting to go upstairs on a hospital ward.

The emergency room crisis is part of a much larger and complex issue analyzed by health expert Michael Decker (page 28). The dilemma of taking care of seniors is explored in this week's cover stories. Both pieces describe the magnitude of the health-care crisis and detail the many positive approaches that are

being attempted. One is pretty simple, making sure that the elderly and the people treating them get annual flu shots. That is one reason why Alberta seems to have coped more effectively with the December invasion of emergency rooms this season.

Another idea whose time has clearly come is the help line. Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children has introduced the service. As the only pediatric hospital in the Greater Toronto Area, its ER must remain open. And it did last week, the only one in Greater Toronto at one point to do so. While there were long waits in ER, the help line helped. The personnel on duty are experienced in giving the right directions—whether a patient should stay at home or come to the hospital. The system she pays off each personal visit to ER costs the institution about \$100, each telephone call costs \$10. The help line is a modest allowance, but the long march to solutions for the health-care crisis will be a journey of a thousand steps.

Robert Lewis



## Newsroom Notes

### Caring for the elderly

There is a popular misconception that after a life of service to their communities and paying their taxes, Canadian seniors can rely on the social safety net if they become ill and require long-term care. But as Senior Writer Patricia Chisholm, Associate Editor Susan McClelland and Life Editor James Deacon found while preparing this week's cover package, there are gaping holes in that net (page 16). Shortages of



McClelland (left), Chisholm (right), shortages

both substandard nursing-home beds and home-care services leave families and friends to pick up the slack—or accept substandard treatment for loved ones. "Both caregivers and patients need much better support from government programs," Chisholm says.

One reason facilities are strained is the increased incidence of Alzheimer's. McClelland found that few facilities have enough trained staff to care properly for the special needs of Alzheimer's patients. "Most people probably think the stories about amnesia and abuse and neglect are merely isolated incidents," McClelland says. "But they're not."



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# The Mail

## The faces of hope

Your "First issue of the 21st century" was an inspiring vision of potential and promise for our country and should fill us with pride and hope as we enter a new millennium ("Faces of the Future," Cover, Jan. 1). It gives us confidence and faith in the new generation of Canadians in whose hands our country's future resides. Those young people reflect, too, the tapestry of cultures that is our heritage and our strength as citizens of a privileged and blessed land.

Levi Perlmutter, Vancouver

You have shown Canadians the face of the future. That face is young, multi-cultural, smart, willing to dream, willing to help, willing to take risks and to have fun doing it. For one brief, shining moment, it was nice not to have to read about Y2K angst, Nagai's debates, the dirty war, the United Alternative and political scandals.

Alan Dolman, Kelowna, B.C.

You deserve our thanks for reminding us that there is good as well as bad. Your "Honour roll" (Cover, Dec. 13, 1999) and "Faces of the future" issues featured the real people, who, despite the chaotic negativity around us, still care deeply about our country, our world and the way we live ourselves. Despite the despairing headlines about violence among children, you showed us

that there are remarkable young people from coast to coast still reaching for the best. It gives us hope and I hope that *Maclean's* will give us this kind of "hit" regularly. We need it. We may even deserve it.

Shelia Reid, Steinbach, Man.

Reading your magnificent issue, I felt very proud of my generation. What Canada needs to watch most is how many of these talented minds end up in the United States—and why.

Rosanne Myren, Kelowna, B.C.

Thank you so much for the momentous first issue of the new millennium. As I read about the outstanding young Canadians, it made me proud to be a Canadian and to know that there are still solid young people around who have worthy goals and who are determined to help Canada and their fellow man. Thanks also for including one deaf person, as we have two deaf children of our own, and are so glad that this group was not forgotten.

Pamela John Blake, Vancouver, B.C.

The issue is a collector's dream and will remain with me for many years to come. Thank you to all the people who put it together—a monumental endeavour.

Nancy Flynn, Toronto

Having lived through all but the first two years of the 20th century, I think I am better able to evaluate and appreciate your special edition. It is enormous in content and very worthwhile. I shall save every one of my 16 grandchildren and more than 20 grand-

## Truly heroic

Amos to Anthony Wilson-Smith's column "Remembering one better" (Jan. 1, 2000). My wife and I could never understand the media's portrayal of the overpaid spoiled-child athlete as a "hero." Wilson-Smith has finally called attention to the essence of this word.

Gardine D. Winters, Vero Beach, Ont.

grandchildren to study these contents. What a triumph it is.

Rajni S. Mills, Toronto

I was captivated by the essay on young Canadians to watch Amy Katz and Kate Cassidy, who started a company called S2 Inc. in honour of the S2 per cent of the population who are women. The article also mentioned that "in the beginning, they hired only women and sold only goods produced

by women." I am a male. I have a friend Bill. We are planning to start a company called 48 Inc. in honour of the 48 per cent of the population who are male. Who knows, if we were able to establish a multi-only production and distribution chain and organize a fund-raiser for the "Anti-sexism Action Centre," we might be included in your next edition of people to watch.

Paul LeBlanc, Milton, Ont.

What a wonderful first issue of the century—witness the year's subscription. I read it from cover to cover and was truly proud to be a Canadian. We have accomplished a great deal.

Isabelle MacArthur, Bala, Ont.

I was pleasantly surprised at your reflection on reflecting the truth about the Canadian government before and during the Second World War when Jews were barred entry into Canada ("Canada refused entry to the best of Jews," Forging a New Century). I was personally involved at the time, visiting my M2 to try to pressure our govern-



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## Letters to the Editor

Maclean's Magazine Letters  
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# Notes

Edited by Tanya Davies

## Celine—still in the spotlight

Quibbles snuffed Celine Dion, 31, has talked about retiring from the stage for the past couple of years in the and husband-manager René Angélil. 37, can start a family. But like her best-selling song *My Heart Will Go On*, in love her public appearance.

● **August, 1998:** Dion dropped the bombshell that she wanted to leave the music industry for a few years in a *USA Today* interview. "I have accomplished a lot and I don't want people to tire of me," explained Dion, who also brought up the baby factor.

● **March, 1999:** The singer announced the date, New Year's Eve, for the start of her sabbatical during a televised chat on the *Berlioni Winter Special*.

● **After Dion** went live five years at the *Juno Awards* that same month, she told the audience: "You probably won't see me onstage receiving an award for a very long time. I'm planning to stop for a while, for a few years at least."

● **New Year's Eve:** Dion performed what she called her



The couple after receiving their music achievement

"last concert" at Montreal's Molson Centre. ● **New Year's Day, 2000:** She sang at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas at a performance for the current top 2,000 "crossover."

● **Jan. 4:** When the nominations for the Feb. 23 Grammy Awards were announced, Dion received a nod for best pop collaboration with Bab

es opens star Andrea Bocelli for their duet *The Prayer*. As singing contenders for the awards, people have started wondering if the muses will perform at the show.

● **Jan. 9:** René and Celine married their wedding vows (they were originally married in 1994) in front of 235 friends at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas. The elaborate *Amber Night*-themed event—to reflect René's Syrian and Lebanese roots—cost \$2.2 million and featured live camels and birds. While the party was loved in private, publicists released photos and video clips of Dion and her husband being carried on *Amber* lounge chairs.

Perhaps Dion should armistice herself of what she said to *USA Today*, and take heed of Dan Hicks & His Hot Licks' 1969 hit song *How Come I Miss Her When She Won't Get Away?*



## Best-Sellers

### Fiction

	WEEKS ON LIST
1. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	
2. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	2
3. <b>A WINTER HONEY</b> (Bantam Doubleday)	1
4. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
5. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
6. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
7. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
8. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
9. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
10. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
11. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
12. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
13. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
14. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
15. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
16. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
17. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
18. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
19. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
20. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1

### Nonfiction

	WEEKS ON LIST
1. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
2. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
3. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
4. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
5. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
6. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
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9. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
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19. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1
20. <b>THE GIVER</b> (Scholastic)	1

(1) Weeks on list

Compiled by Bruce Berman

## Stranger than fiction

Toronto author Max Huras has made a career out of writing about bizarre real-life incidents. His newspaper columns, *Crime Flashback*, have been running for 28 years and he has penned 22 books on the subject. But Huras still managed to find 37 grisly new cases for his latest book, *Murder Heat Wave: Crime from Canada and Around the World* (Viking). For instance, Dana McInnes of Dallas who was caught trying to remove white evidence from under his arrested wife's finger nail by sucking her finger clean



A dog tied up in the Northwest of Halifax, has call for new housing rules

## Getting a shorter leash on life

Four-legged companions can come in all shapes and sizes, but not if they live in Halifax public housing projects. The Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority, which manages its sites, recently banned tenants from owning dogs taller than 40 cm at the shoulder—about the size of a beagle. In as ban, the authority singles out progeny that is dangerous, such as mastiffs, pit bulls and Dobermans of any size, but banished as well as snakes and goats. The MRHA invoked the new rule after true residents complained about vicious dogs running free, scaring children, adults and even some neighbours who were refusing to enter common areas.

However, the housing authority ended up in the doghouse when owners discovered they had only 60 days to find new homes for their pets. Representatives promised a petition with 80

signatures to the MRHA on Jan 4—but the housing authority is standing firm. In addition to dogs running at large, officials also received complaints, as did the Halifax Regional Police Department, that dog bites and other incidents were using such dogs as a show of force to intimidate other tenants. Police also report frequent anonymous tips on scheduled dogfighting for gambling—although to date those illegal events have disturbed before officers arrive.

A market might ban some the largest solution to keep the peace among the 6,500 housing units affected, says MRHA communications manager Narda Jackson. Besides, every case is reviewed individually and adamant poop keeps can plead their case before the housing authority's board of directors. But in certain areas of Halifax, it's still a small dog's life.

## Passages

**Nominated:** Canadian jazz pianist-organist Diana Krall for two Grammy Awards album of the year (*When I Look in Your Eyes*) and best jazz vocal performance; in Los Angeles: Other Canadians nominated for the Feb. 23 music award show include Sarah McLachlan, best female pop performance, best female rock performance and best pop album (*Afterglow*); Shania Twain, song of the year (*Woke Up This Morning*); best female country performance and best country song (*Come On Over*); Celine Dion, best pop collaboration (with Italian Andrea Bocelli for *The Prayer*); best female blues performance; Ben Harper, best classical performance; and Walter Ostanek, best pop album (*Steering for Home*).



Krall's best album?

Marcius, best female pop performance; Ben Harper, best classical performance; and Walter Ostanek, best pop album (*Steering for Home*).

**Died:** Jacob Gershtman, 97, patriarch of the inclusive family that owns the world-renowned West Edmonton Mall, in Edmonton.

**Pulled out:** Joy MacPhail, 47, from the B.C. NDP leadership race, in Victoria. The former finance minister now supports Ujjal Dosanjh in the campaign.

**Died:** Singer Richard (The Heck) Walsh, 51, a founding member of Canadian rock band Downchild Blues Band, of a heart attack, in Toronto.

**Died:** Dorothy Cameron Bloom, 76, the first air dealer in Canada to be charged and convicted of exhibiting drawings on after a 1965 show of drawings on the theme of physical laws of aerodynamics, in Toronto. Cameron appealed her conviction all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada, but lost and closed her gallery.

**Separated:** Media mogul Ted Turner, 61, and actress and fitness guru Jane Fonda, 62, after eight years of marriage in Atlanta.

## Pop Movies

1. <b>Shrek</b> (Miramax)	\$2,142,000
2. <b>Big Daddy</b> (Paramount)	\$2,000,000
3. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$1,900,000
4. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$1,800,000
5. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$1,700,000
6. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$1,600,000
7. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$1,500,000
8. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$1,400,000
9. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$1,300,000
10. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$1,200,000
11. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$1,100,000
12. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$1,000,000
13. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$900,000
14. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$800,000
15. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$700,000
16. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$600,000
17. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$500,000
18. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$400,000
19. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$300,000
20. <b>The Matrix</b> (Warner)	\$200,000

Top movies at Canada, based according to box office grosses during the week ending Jan. 5. (In brackets: number of screens/showing.) Source: Exhibitor Relations Co.

## Puglist pic



Woody Harris and Andy Bausch star in an out-of-town bout in the comedy *Play to Win*. The Best Vince (Harris) and Cesar (Bausch) are best friends who hope for one last shot at a title before their careers are over. Finally, the two qualify for a big Las Vegas bout, but there's a hitch: they have to fight each other.



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## Opening Notes



Probert (left) versus Mander Eric Caruso; fans will pay for an "absurd" jersey

### Explorer

## Blood, sweat and teeth

Given the craze for sports memorabilia, it had to happen. Online Web sites are now offering fans the chance to get up close and personal with the blood and sweat of their favorite hockey heroes—without having to go near the ice. Following are some of the sites that sell signed and ripped jerseys, worn sticks and shin pads, as well as other hockey curios.

**www.dripdripgames.com.** Co-owner Bryan Karaman claims this Newton, Mass.-based site offers some of the dirtiest gear with signs of innumerable rough play. Check out rough guy Bob Probert's Chicago Blackhawks jersey, worn in the 1996-1997 season, priced at \$4,700 and featuring black stick and puck marks with "excellent fight abuse showing." Tim Hunter's Calgary Flames jersey, which bears bloodstains, alcohol stains, seat collar and overall "excellent general filth," recently sold for \$750.

**www.gamedev.com.** Owner Joe Polanco, an apple farmer in Rhode Island, has gems like Bobby Orr dolls for \$90, a can of Rocket Richard extra soap on which bathing suits are \$75, as well as the Toledo Storm jersey worn by U.S. women's Olympic goalie Erin Whitten—the first woman credited with a win in the pro

**www.hyanahockeyland.com.** Retired police detective Milton Byron, a collector for 18 years, put his store online last year. Known for using his investigative skills to authenticate worn, Byron's New Jersey-based site includes a chat room, advice on how to tell a fake, and a list of some 2,500 jerseys he has in stock. Many of these have board burns—colour pressed into the fabric as players were skinned or dragged along the boards. Wayne Gretzky's 1991 Canada Cup jersey recently sold at this site for \$12,000, but Colorado Avalanche forward Joe Sakic's road jersey, complete with stick marks and board burns, is still available for \$6,000.

## Jamming with Gates

**Look out Sony Corp.** and the Williams. Bill Gates and Microsoft Corp. are trying to win over customers' ears. Microsoft has partnered with the Illinois-based I-Jam Multimedia, makers of one of the funniest and loudest portable digital music players to hit the market. The machine, called I-Jam, fits in the palm and can play back music downloaded from the In-

*The I-Jam with memory card, small but loud*

ternet in either MP3 or Windows Media format. I-Jam comes with a built-in FM radio and allows for random playback of recorded digital music. The manufacturer claims it has a maximum audio output of 60 megawatts compared with the market average of five megawatts.

Microsoft aims to challenge MP3's dominance in downloadable music because Windows Media files are more compressed, allowing I-Jam to store twice as much music as MP3-only players. While I-Jam plans to pump up the volume on digital music around the globe, so far it is only available to Americans at [www.ijamworld.com](http://www.ijamworld.com) for \$179.95 U.S.

## Bagless travel

**Some vacationers** are getting help to shoulder the burden of baggage so they can fly with carry-on only. Virtual Bellhop ([www.virtualbellhop.com](http://www.virtualbellhop.com)), operated by Toronto, a Visa, M-based shipping company, now offers door-to-door baggage service. It connects messenger and express companies to pick up luggage and deliver it to hotels at the time its owners are scheduled to check in. Bellhop's fees, much like courier United Parcel Service ([www.ups.com](http://www.ups.com)) and Federal Express ([www.fedex.com](http://www.fedex.com)), are based on weight and distance, and can run as high as the price of another airplane ticket. Unlike couriers, Bellhop will package extra equipment, disassemble wheelchairs and will also hold

carry luggage that arrives ahead of its owner. So far, the service is only available within the United States, but the company plans to offer it in Canada by 2001.

Fedex operates a similar program with several lodges and resorts in the United States, but has no plans yet to tote bags north of the border.

Steven Oh







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before they're embarrassed to  
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## Backstage



Anthony Wilson-Smith

# A fight to control the CBC

One thing to remember about Françoise Bertrand, the chairwoman of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, is that her name was mentioned last year as a candidate for president of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. One thing to know about Bob Rabinovitch, the person who did get the job, is that he was offered the CRTC job in the early 1990s—and turned it down.

In the wake of the conditions the CRTC imposed on the CBC in renewing its licence last week, you could argue Bertrand and Rabinovitch made strategic mistakes. Bertrand, in seeking to reorganize the CBC right down to the scene and timing of its programming, behaved as though the public network job. And Rabinovitch said not have waited so long to run the CBC, given Bertrand's example, he could have taken the CRTC job, and used that to boss around the public broadcaster. Now, the two ran organizations that often appear to vie for the dubious honour of being the more sober, self-censored and mainstream in the country.

But that description scarcely fits Rabinovitch—a tough but amiable, whip-smart guy with a lively sense of humour, equally at home discussing baseball or ballet. It's hard to think of anyone better placed to shake the CBC out of its current slump, brought on by slashed budgets, declining audience share, a hostile prime minister, plummeting morale—and some really bad, boring TV shows. But it's equally hard to think of anyone better equipped to stall when that Bertrand and her 12 fellow CRTC commissioners.

The CBC, if it follows the CRTC's conditions, would lose \$90 million in annual revenue, and be compelled to dump some of its more popular, profitable shows, such as pro sports events and American movies. Less discussed, but of no less significance, is the way the commission seeks to make the CBC—which is already, in the view of many people, over-bureaucratized and overly left-of-centre—even more so. The CRTC, among other things, says the CBC should:

• "More adequately reflect the multicultural and multi-racial nature of Canada and the special place of Canada's Aboriginal Peoples, and to balance their representation on the air and in the workforce in a manner that authentically reflects their participation in Canadian society, and that will help to counteract negative stereotypes."

• "Promote the values that Canadians share. The Commission is encouraging its policies on television violence, sexual portrayal and employment equity. The public broadcaster has a duty to play an exemplary role in these areas."

• "Play a leadership role in ensuring that women are fully

represented in all aspects of CBC television operations. The programming seen on CBC English-language television [should] reflect the rightful place of women in Canadian society, and in such a manner as to eliminate negative stereotypes."

In short, no bad words or actions involving anyone female or non-white or of non-Judeo-Christian background—and to ensure that's the case, the CRTC wants the CBC to file an annual accountability report. And despite acres—sorry, *hectares*—of evidence to the contrary, the CRTC rules for granted that all Canadians believe in the need for employment-equity legislation. Beyond the waffling, patronizing nature of such talk, those instructions are unnecessary. Do women really need regulatory protection from portrayals of themselves? And if you were an example of how to treat multiculturalism in something other than a fringe flower, tune in to Moses Zinnerman-run stations such as MuchMusic, Babel, or Toronto's CityTV and CP24. There, hosts and guests of all colours, genders, backgrounds and sexual persuasions men and women without making it a big deal. That's the way Canada increasingly is, especially among kids, and Zinnerman reflects that in a realistic, entertaining way.

For its part, the CRTC emphasizes that it relied heavily on the 11 public consultations it held across Canada in which about 635 people took part, along with 4,000 written submissions and 87 presentations during hearings in Ottawa. Put another way, fewer than 5,000 of 31 million Canadians could so offer views on their public broadcaster—and those are presumed to represent everyone. And the CRTC chose not to visit Toronto or Montreal, the largest English-and-French language population centres, because "...so many people live in them. It's like the old Yogi Berra line about the insurance where 'nobody goes 'cause it's crowded all the time.'"

It's enough to make nationalists weep—or would be, if their attention weren't elsewhere. Went missing earlier of our past? Try History Television, which last weekend ran *Spy Wars: Camp X*—the story of our role in Allied espionage operations in the Second World War. For homegrown drama, try *Tales from Global*, or for comedy, Mike Ballard, who's basically shapeless as an actor. The Comedy Network or CTV. It's all good stuff—but none might make it onto the CBC, given CRTC constraints. Left to its own devices, there's a strong case for a government-funded public broadcaster, and Rabinovitch, so far, has made a hell of a job. But now, that. "The crux of my theory is my friend," they say in the Middle East. Private broadcasters have always borne the most intense scrutiny from the CBC. Today, they must live the CBC.

# All in The Family

By Patricia Chisholm

**In retrospect, Surrey, B.C.,** geriatric analyst Janet Ollhoff can hardly believe she managed it. In November, 1998, her life was thrown into turmoil when her father, Hans, suffered a debilitating stroke. While he struggled for survival in a hospital intensive care unit, the 58-year-old Ollhoff moved her mother, Ingrid, into her own home. For a decade, her father had taken care of Ingrid after she suffered her own massive stroke. Ollhoff's days became exhausting and emotionally draining. She had to do everything for her mother, from cooking food into small bits and changing her diapers to monitoring her diabetes and heart condition. In the evenings, while her husband, Al, looked after her mother, Ollhoff visited her father, lifting him onto the toilet or feeding him when morning help was unavailable. Juggling their needs and her own job took its toll. "I felt completely isolated," Ollhoff recalls. "No one could understand what I was going through."

Such stories are becoming alarmingly common. Tens of thousands of Canadian baby boomers are confronting the challenge of taking care of their parents, often when they are heavily weighed down by the demands of career and family life. Every family copes in its own way but the issues each faces are remarkably similar. What does a diagnosis of chronic illness—stroke, Parkinson's disease, osteoporosis—really mean? Will it be possible to care for an elderly spouse or relative at home, or is an institution the only answer? If so, will there be enough money to pay for quality care that can easily cost thousands of dollars per month?

Then there is the guilt. In Ollhoff's case, it came late full, after she placed her parents, both 70, in a nursing home in nearby Cloverdale. Although she visits them every evening—the nursing home is about 20 minutes from her home in Surrey—she still wrestles with the emotional fallout of deciding to move them to an institution. "I cry all the time," she says. "There is major guilt. Maybe if I'd spent more time with my mom, my dad wouldn't have gotten sick."

The dilemma of caring for the elderly are not new, but there is no doubt that finding solutions is more urgent than ever before. By 2021, Health Canada estimates, there will be 6.9 million Canadians over the age of 65, almost double the current number. An alarming proportion will have Alzheimer's disease, an increasingly common form



**Shortcomings in institutional and home care leave relatives facing more costs and responsibilities**

*Washlow (left) and Porter in Sackville, N.S.: Porter has no regrets, but wishes she had been prepared for her caregiving role*

of dementia that is already straining services for the elderly (page 22). "I believe there will be a crisis if we don't plan properly," says Marilyn McMullen, associate director of the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging at Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax. "It is, however, one that can be fully averted. This is the most predictable demographic change we've ever had."

To tackle that problem, governments will have to build far more facilities and provide better home-care services than are available right now. In fact, families who have struggled to find affordable care for their relatives say the crisis is already here. On average, only seven per cent of seniors require long-term institutional care, yet many people with relatives in nursing homes cite shocking levels of neglect and incompetence care. As well, conditions inside some homes can be grim—smells rank with the smell of urine, residents locked in their rooms to prevent them from wandering. When family members complain, their concerns are often dismissed by overworked staff who are overpaid, tired and angry.

Adding to families' concerns is the bewildering quilt of so-

called government standards across the country. In Ontario, "nursing homes" are substandard and regulated while "nursing homes" are not. There are also wide disparities among the provinces on home care. British Columbia imposes no limit on the number of hours of home care—services provided to seniors in their own homes by health-care professionals. In Prince Edward Island, only 28 hours a week of such care is paid for by the government. Karen Porter and Malcolm Anderson, authors of a 1999 report on home care in Canada, argue that there is no coherent strategy, not sufficient money and manpower, to provide these services. "That's fine for people who can afford to buy private care, or for those with low incomes who qualify for subsidies," says Anderson, the director of research at the Queen's Health Policy Research Unit in Kingston, Ont. "But there is a middle band of people who become impoverished by having to provide for themselves. The growing trend is that more and more responsibility is being placed upon families to provide the care that was once publicly funded."

There is mounting pressure to improve what professionals



## The Family

# Ninety per cent of eldercare in Canada is provided by family members, and 60 per cent of those caregivers are women

with daily tasks like bathing and brushing her teeth.

Pomer has no regrets, but she wishes she had been more prepared for her role as a caregiver. There are times when she feels that her act of caring has become a job and she craves more time for herself, although government paid home-care workers help out three times a week, the house is so tiny that Pomer must leave when they are there. The best solution, she says, would be a long-term care facility in Sackville, so that she could visit her mother daily but there isn't one. "After my grandmother, I'm afraid for old people," Pomer says. "They better have more places for the elderly, or they'll be out on the street."

Some communities have resorted to looking after themselves. Among those long-term institutions with consistently high reputations—and winning lots of awards—are those set up and administered by groups with a strong tradition of caring for the elderly. The Mon Sheng Foundation Home for the Aged, nestled in a residential neighbourhood near Toronto's Chinatown, houses 105 residents of Chinese descent in bright, airy rooms, with modern extras such as exercise equipment. And at the 188-bed Villa Carthy Care Home in Vancouver, nurses speak Mandarin, Cantonese and usually one other Chinese dialect, the kitchen serves Chinese cuisine, the recreation schedule includes chi chi and bungee, local Chinese groups perform Cantonese operas, the circular gardens around Chinese holidays and festivals, including the new year on February 5. As a result, says spokeswoman Chang, Villa Carthy's managers, the home has a one-year waiting list.

Similarly popular in Markham's Hospital Geriatric Centre, in the residential neighbourhood of Cîte St. Luc is

Manoel. Serving the province's Jewish community, the 307-bed home has a synagogue on-site where two part-time rabbis—for the Sephardic and Ashkenazi faiths—conduct services for all occasions, including Passover, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. In addition to a medical staff, the centre has a recreation department that co-ordinates social and cultural activities, and several hundred volunteers who run the gift shop and take residents for walks.

Still, quality nursing homes cannot look after the vast majority of seniors. The better solution for them, according to a 1998 recommendation by the National Forum on Health and supported by many leading gerontologists, would be a national system of home care. Embracing everything from weekly housekeeping to daily visits from a registered nurse, home care allows elderly people to remain in familiar surroundings until the last stages of physical decline. It is far less expensive than institutional care—estimates range from \$50 to \$200 a day—and is more emotionally satisfying for both the elderly and their families if there is enough support from visiting professionals. "In the past few decades, we have found that things other than hospitals, drugs and tests are crucial for good health," says Norma Chappell, director of the Centre on Aging at the University of Victoria. "Good social supports, more exercise, better nutrition—that are generally better delivered by home care—are at least as important."

Even though academics and lobby groups, such as Canada's Association for the Fifty-Plus, have long pushed the idea, most provincial governments have been unwilling to commit sufficient resources to home care. Ontario recently capped



Thomas Kambel's injuries sustained in a moving home fall, see Ernest (left), without resources to care for Thomas, the staff just 'dropped him off'

home-care entitlements at a mere 60 hours a month. But where the services are available, they can help find seniors remain independent. Eighty-year-old Bill Cummings of Toronto has been confined to a wheelchair since he suffered a minor stroke in 1997. He balances now a wheelchair and his hearing has declined. But the former laboratory technician still gets around. Cummings is a regular at the Mid-Toronto Community Services frail-elderly program in a church a few blocks from his downtown home. A music came by there once a week after he was discharged from the hospital, but he only requires once a week help with cleaning and tidying up. A nurse helps out with groceries and he calls her every day just to check in. Cummings' long-term care is unclaimed and he says there is really nothing he lacks in addition to the social life at the community services centre, he has breakfast every day at a restaurant near his one-bedroom apartment, and once a month, he has supper with his

Anglican priest. "If they told me I had to go into a nursing home, I wouldn't budge," he says. "That is long as I can look after myself reasonably well, I'd rather live on my own."

Guy Prods, director of psychology at Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care in Toronto, has spent the better part of three decades working with the elderly. He says that while the system has many flaws, he is becoming more optimistic about the future, largely because there is greater understanding of the problems, and growing demand for change. "I have noticed that people now are much more actively aware of the frustrations and the issues, and that is music to my ears," Prods says. "Whereas in the olden days of old as, but this is much better than ignoring the problems."

With Steve McChesney in Toronto, Bruce Bergman in Calgary, Jennifer Huxley in Vancouver and Steven Ashkenfeld in Halifax

## Provinces struggle to keep up with the demand for senior care

An estimated seven per cent of Canada's 3,795,127 seniors currently require institutional care, and 10.3 per cent require some form of home care. Generally, publicly funded home care is free, while the per day cost to patients to live in publicly funded institutions is between \$25 and \$50, based on income.

The following statistics, supplied by the provinces and Statistics Canada, record the number of people aged 65 and

over in each province, the number of beds at publicly funded institutions, the number of people on waiting lists for those beds, the number of people receiving some form of home care, the maximum number of hours or dollars of publicly funded home care for non-acute care clients, and the number of people on home care waiting lists. Figures for private nursing homes and private home care are not available.

BRITISH COLUMBIA		ALBERTA		SASKATCHEWAN		ONTARIO		QUEBEC		NEW BRUNSWICK/LABRADOR		NEWFOUNDLAND/LABRADOR	
Number of seniors	119,254	Number of seniors	294,610	Number of seniors	148,757	Number of seniors	1,444,000	Number of seniors	1,444,000	Number of seniors	123,830	Number of seniors	62,062
Long-term-care beds	24,707	Long-term-care beds	13,767	Long-term-care beds	8,981	Long-term-care beds	56,590	Long-term-care beds	5,877	Long-term-care beds	123,830	Long-term-care beds	2,358
Waiting list	about 7,000	Waiting list	not available	Waiting list	not available	Waiting list	about 10,000	Waiting list	not available	Waiting list	not available	Waiting list	480
Total receiving home care	about 105,000 per year	Total receiving home care	65,199 per year	Total receiving home care	22,816 per year	Total receiving home care	about 400,000 per year	Total receiving home care	60 to 120 per month	Total receiving home care	12,000 per year	Total receiving home care	850 per month
Maximum hours	unlimited	Maximum hours	\$3,600 per month	Maximum hours	not available	Maximum hours	60 to 120 per month	Maximum hours	4,143	Maximum hours	not available	Maximum hours	will fund up to \$2,258 per month
Waiting list	none	Waiting list	not available	Waiting list	not available	Waiting list	11,000	Waiting list	about 63	Waiting list	12,674 per month	Waiting list	252



## Alzheimer's is devastating for those who have it and for their families. It threatens to overwhelm Canada's fragile system of care for the elderly.

on two occasions, he attacked his wife while she slept. In the mornings, he never remembered a thing—a fact that only made Joan's life more unending.

But the toughest stage came in 1996 when she decided she could no longer handle him all by herself. She searched for and eventually joined a publicly funded nursing home near their home, and hoped it would ease both her workload and suffering. It did not. The staff there addressed Norman's physical needs—food, comfort, hygiene—but she says they did not seem to know how to deal with Alzheimer's dementia. So Joan went in several times every day to sit and talk with Norman. At the end, she slept in a cot beside his bed because, just as it had been when he was still at home, "you had to have one eye open all the time," she says.

It proved too much. Even with her husband in a facility that was supposed to be shouldering the bulk of his care, Joan couldn't sleep, she had no social or professional life, and she required antidepressants to get through the days. Then, in the last six months before he died, Norman didn't even recognize her.

"Not only was I dealing with my own grief of watching Norman die, but I had to deal with the pain of seeing him become someone else right in front of me," she recalls two years later. "Then I got him in an wheelchair and they didn't tell him, comfort him or treat him like the human being he was. Physically, emotionally and spiritually, I lost much of my strength."

Delirium and worry is alarmingly common. Family members or friends usually take on much of the clock responsibilities in the initial stages of Alzheimer's, and they do so often at the expense of their own emotional and physical health. They are more likely to strain down passions, take losses of themselves, like Joan, leave the workforce altogether because the care required is so immense. Moreover, the Canadian Medical Association reported in 1999 that up to 56 per cent of informal caregivers of Alzheimer's patients experience "significant psychiatric symptoms." Steve Rudin, president of the Alzheimer Society of Canada, says the impact of the disease is felt throughout society. "It touches the economy, social services and our entire health system," he says.

That impact is growing in force. Alzheimer's—the

fifteen-growing disease among seniors—a steady overwhelming the country's institutional and home-care systems. The Alzheimer society reports that 346,500 people over the age of 65 in the country are suffering from the disease or from a related dementia, such as that caused by other conditions including multiple strokes or diseases such as Parkinson's. Although exact figures are not available, experts estimate that as many as half of all patients in long-term-care facilities in Canada have the disease. Yet most nursing homes were built to treat physically ill patients, not those who suffer from dementia. And although more funds in Canada are being funnelled into home care, those services are diluted by health-system cutbacks in other areas. As a result, some of those funds are being used to treat acute care patients with other maladies who have been discharged early from hospitals with too few beds available.

That, experts say, puts Canada on the verge of a catastrophe if governments don't start building facilities and training workers to serve the 750,000 Canadian baby boomers who are expected to suffer from Alzheimer's in 2051. They had better get started: they still haven't discovered the precise cause of the disease, let alone a cure, and current medications only treat symptoms in the early stages of the disease. "People have been killed into assuming that a psychiatric system sits in place to deal with these numbers," said Timothy Young, president of the Canadian Home Care Association. "But they're wrong."

**Also Alzheimer's**, a German neurologist, discovered symptoms of the disease that bears his name in 1906. But until recently, doctors could not accurately make a diagnosis except during autopsies that revealed unusual knotted, rope-like structures inside the nerve cells of the cerebral cortex, the part of the brain responsible for memory and learning. Protein deposits, or what Alzheimer termed "senile plaques," can also be found between the cells.

In the past 10 years, however, specialists have developed neurological and psychological diagnostic tests on living patients that are about 90 per cent accurate. Dr. Peter St George-Hyslop, a neurologist and molecular geneticist who heads

*Seller at her kitchen table: The account that I refuse I don't understand*

### The Family

# Hidden Heartbreak

By Susan McClelland

Joan and Norman Pitham had a good life together. In 43 years of marriage, the Newmarket, Ont., couple raised three children, built a successful small business and lived a comfortable middle-class life. They were, says Joan, "soul mates." But by the time Norman was in his mid-50s, Joan, a nurse, began to notice he was getting more forgetful. He lost money and would become disoriented even in familiar surroundings. By 1994, when Norman was 58, he was no longer able to function properly at work and was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. "We were planning our retirement, we were going to go places together and do things," Joan says wistfully. "I knew all along we weren't going to,

but somehow I kept hanging on to the belief that things would change."

Instead, she gave up her own work, and for 30 months, she was Norman's full-time caregiver at home—a grueling and emotionally draining 24-hour responsibility unique to Alzheimer's. Beyond cooking, cleaning and bathing, Joan became the link between Norman and his mind, filing in words, names and memories when he forgets. She had to keep her husband from harming himself or from wandering away from their home north of Toronto. Some nights, Norman would awaken, and although his once-robust 200-lb body had shrunk to 150 lb., he still found the strength to move into bed frames, mattresses, cupboards and bookshelves—for no reason. Sometimes he had nightmares, and

up one of the world's leading research departments on the disease at the University of Toronto, says Alzheimer's is likely caused by unknown biological changes resulting from genetic and environmental factors. But despite speculation that aluminum in drinking water or head injuries could be triggers, no environmental factor has been proven for certain," he says. In the past 10 years in Canada, governments, foundations and pharmaceutical companies have gradually allocated more money—experts estimate between \$3 million and \$5 million annually—towards Alzheimer's research. As a result, scientists are confident there will be more treatments available for sufferers in the next 10 years.

Even so, the only certain explanation for the increasing incidence of the disease is that people are living longer. What is known about Alzheimer's is that it presently affects people over 65 and is marked by signs at which, increasingly, there is impaired judgment, mood and space disorientation, mood swings and short-term and then long-term memory loss. St. George-Hypack claims the disease usually progresses over a 10-year period, from the first signs of symptoms to death, though it varies with each patient. In the final stages, sufferers cannot communicate, and eventually, they are weakened to the point where they are susceptible to other, and ultimately fatal, diseases such as pneumonia.

Perhaps the saddest aspect in Alzheimer's cruel advance is when patients are still aware of their declining faculties. "The one thing no one wants is to lose their mind," says St. George-Hypack. "It attacks what we make most about being human." Norma Selbie, 68, a former elementary schoolteacher in Kelowna, B.C., concurs. "People joke that Alzheimer's is just forgetting things, but it is much more than that," says Selbie, who is in the early stages of the disease. "I will be talking to someone and all of a sudden I don't understand what the words mean. I will forget that your conversation ever took place or that I now a movie or visited with a friend. The story or thing is when I realize I don't understand, or I have forgotten. I become quickly anxious and insecure."

It is scary, too, for caregivers, who receive the unexpected casualties of the Alzheimer's war. Spouses, friends or offspring gradually take on more responsibility for meals, transportation, and organizing the finances and handle often without realizing their relative is suffering from a disease that requires more help than they can provide. "If you don't see yourself as providing care," says Nereis Keating, professor of human



Geriatric St. George-Hypack. Helen and her mother, Helen (below right), doctor and scientist will do not know in exact cause, but show how it can be cared.

ecology at the University of Alberta and past president of the Canadian Association on Gerontology. "It is very difficult to teach our families."

Many family members and health-care professionals told Maclean's that in the course of providing for a sick loved one, they become increasingly isolated from friends and other family members. "People just don't understand it, they don't know what to do," said Joyce Paron, who cares for her 80-year-old mother, Helen, at home in Berners, N.B. "My mother always asks where everyone is. It's very painful when not only my mother's friends but even my own friends don't keep in touch." Still, these caregivers are asked by society to cover up the illness and avoid what they feel is a negative social stigma. "Because Alzheimer's manifests itself as a mental illness," says Keating, "there is an attempt to protect the person who is ill from being exposed."

While the Alzheimer's crisis is nationwide, few provinces have moved to meet it. Despite increased funding for home care, most patients receive only a few hours a week of care rather than the constant attention they often need. And even when home care is available, it is inconsistent and differs from province to province—some patients may get only a few hours a week, others, several hours a day.

In fact, Ontario is the only province with a dedicated unit to cope specifically with Alzheimer's. It began to examine the problem in the late-1980s, and last fall, announced a five-

## One of the biggest challenges of treating Alzheimer's is that what works for one person may not suit another

year, \$66.4-million strategy to fund research and training for physicians and nurses. Ontario also plans to help home-based caregivers by covering more adult day-care programs and by increasing the funding for visiting nurses, therapists, homemakers and services such as Meals on Wheels. "We recognized that families were carrying too much and it was important to give those struck by Alzheimer's a better system to work within," said Helen Johnson, Ontario's minister responsible for seniors.

Still, experts say they are unsure whether the promised amounts and the content of the programs are enough to deal with the problem. One of the bigger challenges with Alzheimer's is that it is so labor intensive—what works for one sufferer may not suit another. An out-of-home day-care program might be ideal for a patient who is used to the company of others, but not for a patient who is accustomed to more privacy. "Each person's life experience will have a lot to do with what programs they feel comfortable with," says Dr. Carole Cohen, clinical director of community psychiatric

services for the elderly at Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Centre in Toronto.

As well, Cohen says, professionals must do a better job evaluating when a caregiver is in and crisis, or when the sufferer needs to be placed in a long-term-care facility. "Since dementia is progressive, it is hard to know how to judge if the supports are OK for now, and whether they will be OK in six months, a year," said Cohen. Part of the process, she adds, is helping the caregiver come to terms with having to place the patient in an institution. That, she says, "is one of the most difficult decisions a loved one will ever make. Caregivers feel they have failed at this role."

An Joan Pollack found, though, the caring doesn't end when patients are admitted to nursing homes. And a recent tour of two Toronto publicly funded facilities proved there is a broad disparity in the quality of care available. In one, most of the patients were heavily sedated. They spent their day sitting in chairs or wandering aimlessly along narrow corridors. A few patients sat limply in a recreation room that was furnished with a table, a couple of chairs, a TV set and some old magazines. The walls were whitewashed and barren of paintings, photographs or decorations. The home had another recreation room equipped with cards, puzzles, toys and games, but it was rarely used, one staff member admitted, because there is no one available to show patients how to use the materials. There are residents whose families and friends never visit, and there are no volunteers to organize recreational activities.

In contrast, the other home—which owns patients exactly the same—had hallways lined with comfortable antique chairs and tables, and walls adorned with black-and-white photographs, oil paintings and shelves filled with books, records and tape—the contents of a real home. Nurses are encouraged to tag their patients and talk to them. The home employs full-time recreational co-ordinators who organize arts and crafts, music and athletic programs daily for the 26 patients on the floor. And volunteers often bring pets and little children into the home to visit, play and talk with residents. The home, a charitable nonprofit facility, regularly sends staff to training seminars on how to care for dementia patients. The facility also follows Alzheimer Society guidelines for care.

Experts say the disparities are most often the result of a lack of trained staff, or a failure to understand the unique needs of Alzheimer's patients. Typically, the primary mandate of nurses and aides in nursing homes is to address physical needs, such as preparing medications, turning beds and helping bathe, dress and feed patients. "The majority of health-care programs operate on the biomedical para-



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## The Family

diagnose—you have a disease, you find the disease and then you fix it," says Vancouver consultant Meera Jones, the author of *Gravidia*, which outlines a model for caring for Alzheimer's disease. Alzheimer's requires far more from already hardworking nursing staff, Jones says, adding: "A person with Alzheimer's often doesn't just need medical care. They need lifestyle care."

To achieve that, everyone from doctors to janitors needs to be instructed on how to deal with the illness, says Joanne Michael, co-ordinator of the Saskatchewan Alzheimer Society's Enhancing Care Program. "When staff understand that the changes in behaviour are part of the disease and not the fault of the individual," she says, "they feel more comfortable in performing their responsibilities."

For some caregivers, there is joy amid the problems. Andrew Ignatoff, whose brother Michael drew on the experiences of his mother's struggles with Alzheimer's in his 1993 novel, *Scar Tissue*, says he loved caring for his mother, Alison, despite her dementia. For five years until she died in September, 1992, he was her primary caregiver. He quit his job as director of the Canadian Save the Children program in Peru and returned to Toronto when it became clear his mother needed his attention. "Just thinking about Alzheimer's makes every people rigid with terror," he says. "But for me, the memories are beautiful and unforgettable—grace, quiet walks with her, watching as she caressed flowers and tried to pet."

Even with the challenges—the sleepless nights, the battles waged with institutions and hospitals, placing his professional goals on hold—Ignatoff claims it was the most fulfilling job he has ever done. "I learned about her, and I learned about myself," he said. Despite the disease, he says, he never lost his mother. "She was always there," he says, "and I was able to find out more and more about her, and who she really was." In the absence of a cure, that is the best that anyone could hope for. ■

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# A plan to end the hospital crisis

There are three main causes of the problems: the flu epidemic, a squeeze on the system and the lack of alternatives to emergency rooms



By Michael Dexter

As Canadians entered the new year, a new poll revealed that Pierre Elliott Trudeau was our most popular prime minister. Rather than basking in the glow of his fully regained popularity, the 80-year-old former PM struggled with the flu in a Montreal hospital bed. Millions of other Canadians were also laid low. Too many arrived at overcrowded hospital emergency rooms. Canada's latest health-care crisis lasted just in time to fill the news hole created when the Y2K panic evaporated.

The overcrowded emergency room rapidly became the lightning rod for all those disgruntled about Canada's health-care system. In Canada, no health-care story is complete without a round of the blame game. Yet under the finger pointing, Canadians, many severely ill, languished in hospital corridors and around city streets in ambulances as emergency rooms closed to all but life-threatening patients.

Why does this situation exist in the first year 2000?

There are three chief causes of the current problems. The first is the annual flu epidemic, which, this season, created more business for hospitals as Christmas holidays were taken by doctors and nurses. Peak demand met doleful staffing. The second is the absence of disability in a hospital system squeezed for nearly a decade. The third is the lack of alternatives to the emergency room—an ailment: the lack of sufficient investment in the Canadian health-care system of the future.

Imagine if our banks had closed thousands of branches and then, several years later, began re-opening ATMs. The branches at the remaining branches in the transition years would have been vast and inaccessible. Instead, the banks closed thousands of ATMs in neighbourhoods across the country while leaving most branches open. Now, with the Canadian public shifted to ATMs and telephone banking, branch closures are not an issue. The lesson—build the new before dismantling the old—has not been applied in health care. We closed thousands of hospital beds and dozens of hospitals before making needed investments in home care and community care.

We are rapidly moving to the 24-7 society. Many services

and stores operate on a 24-hours-per-day, seven-days-per-week basis. This has shaped our expectations as consumers. The pain comes in 30 minutes. Why not home care? In health care, there is a sharp divide between the 24-7 health system and the rest. The 24-7 world consists of ambulances, hospital emergencies, a few pharmacies and some home care. But the 9-5 world embraces doctors' offices, clinics, most pharmacies and most home care.

The consequence of this divide is an aversion of the 24-7 services. Many people go to emergency rooms for information, not because they are certain it is the appropriate place to go. After hours calls to doctors' offices are often greeted by answering machines directing them to the nearest emergency room. It is the only game in the health-care town.

We built a system in an era when the key concern was acute care. The trauma victims, the heart-attack patient needing emergency care shaped facilities. But our rising health need is in chronic care. We are living longer and for the most part in relatively good health. Millions of Canadians will struggle to cope with one or more chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes or arthritis. Our health system is not yet organized to support people with chronic conditions in the earliest and most effective point of intervention. Treating acute episodes of chronic disease in an emergency room is a poor response compared with the benefits of earlier diagnosis and careful disease management.

The emergency overcrowding issue is not the same in every part of Canada. In Alberta, most health services are under a single structure. One organization is responsible for hospitals, public health, long-term care. In Edmonton, that organization is the Capital Health Authority Executive vice-president Dr. Robert Fleck explains Edmonton's success: "It has not been a rose garden, but we had the capacity to problem-solve right across the system." Another factor of note is the campaign led by Dr. Gerry Healy, medical officer of health, to get people to take flu shots. In 1999, Edmonton did even better than 1998 when 70 per cent of the population was vaccinated. Health authorities are not the only advocates of the flu vaccine. Canada's largest nursing-home chain, Evercare, ordered mandatory vaccination for its entire workforce. The result—much fewer absenteeism and healthier workers.

Eight provinces have followed the lead of Saskatchewan and adopted a regional management model for health services. Properly funded, this model offers better management of health services and a greater emphasis on a healthy population. In Greater Toronto, responsibility now with 25 separate



hospitals, while accountability rests with a beleaguered minister. It is an open invitation to the blame game rather than problem-solving.

Smaller cities such as Kingston, Ont., are coping better than larger cities. Why? The answer is that in smaller centres it is easier to co-ordinate hospital, home care and other health services. In a smaller centre, accountability and responsibility are more powerfully aligned. Further, to solve problems is transparent to the local newspaper and population. Accountability and responsibility are direct and obvious.

This ability to manage across the health services is missing in Toronto. The Ontario Ministry of Health struggles to co-ordinate dozens of independent entities. Duncan Sinclair, chairman of Ontario's Health Services Restructuring Commission observes: "We have now, in effect, a single, fragmented (and dangerously inefficient) 'integrated' health system in Ontario. Everyone who carries an Ontario health card is a member. It is too big and poorly organized for its size."

A single structure for managing health services is not a panacea. Montreal has a regional board but insufficient resources to meet the challenge. Quebec now spends less per capita on health services than Newfoundland. Structures can help direct resources more efficiently but only if there are resources to direct.

What is to be done? There are a number of practical steps that could reduce future crowding and inappropriate use of emergency rooms:

## Strengthen prevention

- Flu shots for the elderly should be a priority. The federal government could contribute by launching a national advertising campaign to support local and provincial efforts. If all health organizations in Canada vaccinated their workers for the flu, a full 750,000 people would be affected.
- Deal with the housing shortage for the poor. Canada's disgraceful withdrawal from the promise of public housing has made many of Canada's poor into Canada's ill. The

emergency room is the wrong place to deal with homelessness and its consequences.

## Build a 24-7 health system

- Make nurses available on the telephone to all Canadians to provide health information without a visit to the emergency room or the doctor's office.
- Provide more and better-funded home care on a 24-7 basis. Add quick response teams to emergency rooms to shut non-critically ill patients can be sent home safely with a home-care nurse as an alternative to a night in the hallway. Victoria has successfully utilized the quick-response team model for more than a decade.
- Invest in 24-7 primary care. Organize and fund doctors and nurses to be available in urgent-care clinics.
- Designate 24-7 pharmacies, available within a 15-minute drive of city dwellers.

## Invest in long-term care

- Increase investment in long-term-care services and beds. In each Canadian hospital, five to 10 per cent of the beds are occupied by patients denied, by their doctors, ready to move to long-term care.

New Year's night a father brought his ill child to the emergency room of St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto. He also brought a pollen gun. When he took a doctor hostage, police intervened, shots were fired and the man died. The radio call-shown, fairly or unfairly, worse than tragedy was the larger tragedy of the emergency room story. This tragedy is in conflict with our pride in Canadian health care. It may be an ominous foreshadowing of what awaits us if we are unwilling to move forward. We can do better. We should. Perhaps by next new year's overcrowded emergency will be as disaster as Y2K.

Michael Dexter is the chairman of the Canadian Institute for Health Information. He has served as deputy minister of health for Ontario and is the author of *Waking Up to the Truth*.



## 'There is no way the CBC can implement these decisions, period'

By John Geddes

**What a difference** a word or two of jargon makes. When the top federal broadcaster regulator, Francine Bernard, was asked last week how she expected the CBC to pay for the raft of new programming demands she's trying to impose, the lapsed into blustered bureaucratese: "I think with re-allocation and re-engineering," Bernard intoned, "certainly there is the possibility of adding sufficient funds there." Even some of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission chairwoman's allies later admitted that they winced at the spoke. Consume Bernard's verbiage with the no-nonsense message the CBC's new president, Bob Rabinovitch, fired back in reply: "There is no way the CBC can implement these decisions," Rabinovitch



Rabinovitch (left), Bernard (below):  
a debate over fundamentally different  
visions for a national broadcaster

ovich has not ruled out going to the Liberals for a hike after he establishes his credibility at the helm of the broadcaster.

Still, his assault on the CRTC was more than an opening move in a bigger chess game. At the core of the clash is a difference of perspective on the CBC's place in Canadian public life. Bernard stressed that her critique was shaped by those public consultations. The licence-renewal document she produced was peppered with quotations from participants like Bill Hood, 71, a retired banker from Malpeque, P.E.I., who turned out for the session in Charlottetown, mainly to lead CBC Radio and voice support for local television news. In an interview last week, Hood said what he liked best about the CRTC's licence-renewal decision was its rejection of the CBC's request for limited commercial sponsorship on radio. "Advertising would have killed the whole thing," he declared.

Back in the big broadcasting capitals that were ignored by the CRTC and show the notion of snipping out a CBC strategy based on gatherings in the hinterland was viewed as quaint. "Public hearings like that would put a resistor of CBC enthusiasts," said Peter Lyman, a partner at Price-waterhouseCoopers in Toronto. "But when you get down to figures on what's doing it, it's another story." Lyman worked on a major report on the state of Canadian television for pro-

vince Rabinovitch determined to assure the CRTC. And there may be little Bernard can do to push back. While she has the power to revoke the licence of a private broadcaster who refuses to follow orders, the CRTC holds no such hammer over the CBC. All Bernard can do is complain to the government. Similarly, Rabinovitch has the option of appealing the CRTC's decision to Heritage Minister Sheila Copps within 90 days. Or he can try to just stand pat, a tactic that has worked before. Back in the early 1970s, CBC president Laurent Picard defied a CRTC order to reduce TV advertising—and the government did nothing. Rabinovitch beat Bernard hands down in an opening skirmish of sound bites. But, to repeat his predecessor Picard's victory, he must now turn that pithy public performance into a persuasive private message to the politicians who will decide the ultimate winner. ■

## 'The CBC should present more programming originating from across the country'



# Bob Rabinovitch Says No

said. "Period. Unless somebody wants to buy the Toronto broadcast centre from me."

Actually, selling off the downtown Toronto facility might sound like a fine idea to many of those who helped shape Bernard's thinking. In preparing to set the scene for renewing the CBC's licence for seven years, the CRTC held public meetings in 11 cities from St. John's, Nfld., to Vancouver, B.C. March—beyond the broadcasting capitals of Toronto and Montreal. Not surprisingly, those consultations elicited a steady drumbeat of support for regional programming. Bernard dutifully culled what she heard. Her most demands for the English-TV service: air more drama and variety produced outside Toronto and restore regional weekend newscasts axed during past rounds of budget cuts, while scaling back on professional sports and burningish non-Canadian movies in prime time. "The CBC should present on its national services substantially more programming originating from across the country," said the CRTC's directive. Rabinovitch rallied up the added production costs and forgone commercial revenues at \$50 million a year. "The money just isn't there," he said, "and that's why we have real problems with the decision."

Rabinovitch's objections, though, go deeper than the bottom line. His written response put at least as much emphasis

on alarming Bernard for "unacceptable intentions" (the CBC's managerial and programming independence) as it did on indicting the CRTC for alleged "fiscal irresponsibility." The clear message Rabinovitch, who took over the CBC on Nov. 15, wants time to put his stamp on the country's biggest cultural institution with a minimum of regulatory meddling. Some observers pointed out that while \$50 million is no small sum, it is only about four per cent of the CBC's \$1.2-billion annual budget. "In his previous role, a four-per-cent reallocation is something he would have been capable of doing to some company," said Ian Morrison, spokesman for the Friends of Canadian Broadcasting lobby group, referring to Rabinovitch's last job as chief operating officer of Charles Brannstrom's Clamnet Inc.

Morrison, who pressed the CRTC's regional theme, speculated that Rabinovitch's real aim might have been to set a confidence test early, with an eye to a future plea to boost the CBC's \$750-million-a-year allowance from Ottawa. "The real effect of his response is to put how much the CBC is funded back on the public agenda," Morrison said. "It's certainly capable of that kind of machiavellian activity. I'm not saying that was his goal, but if it was, he has succeeded." Senior CBC sources said, however, that while asking the government for more cash this year is one of the questions, Rabi-

vitch was not ruling out going to the Liberals for a hike after he establishes his credibility at the helm of the broadcaster. Still, his assault on the CRTC was more than an opening move in a bigger chess game. At the core of the clash is a difference of perspective on the CBC's place in Canadian public life. Bernard stressed that her critique was shaped by those public consultations. The licence-renewal document she produced was peppered with quotations from participants like Bill Hood, 71, a retired banker from Malpeque, P.E.I., who turned out for the session in Charlottetown, mainly to lead CBC Radio and voice support for local television news. In an interview last week, Hood said what he liked best about the CRTC's licence-renewal decision was its rejection of the CBC's request for limited commercial sponsorship on radio. "Advertising would have killed the whole thing," he declared.

Back in the big broadcasting capitals that were ignored by the CRTC and show the notion of snipping out a CBC strategy based on gatherings in the hinterland was viewed as quaint. "Public hearings like that would put a resistor of CBC enthusiasts," said Peter Lyman, a partner at Price-waterhouseCoopers in Toronto. "But when you get down to figures on what's doing it, it's another story." Lyman worked on a major report on the state of Canadian television for private broadcaster in 1998, which found viewers scattering among the new specialty channels, making it tougher than ever for networks to hold audiences—especially with the sort of reportedly floundering for the CRTC, a punky the CBC to emphasize. "It's harder to get advertising for so-called drama in the past," Lyman said, "because they draw nothing in the way of viewers because of audience fragmentation."

But Rabinovitch and his top executives were cautious not to sound disrespectful of vision like Hood's. "I do believe there are legitimate regional aspirations that have to be reflected in our programming," said Harold Roddappa, vice-president of English-language television. "But what the CBC has been called first and foremost to do is provide programming that people from coast to coast can identify with." Making a costly push into beefing up local news does not fit with that national vision. Yet the CRTC is demanding a reorientation of regional weekend newscasts—even though the CBC's existing weeknight local news shows are getting pampered by private stations in most cities. Audience figures released to *Maclean's* by the CBC showed its Vancouver newscast, to cite a dismal example, attracting just seven per cent of daily evening news viewers, compared with 64 per cent for market-leading CTV's *At Home*.

With numbers like those in pocket, no wonder Rabi-

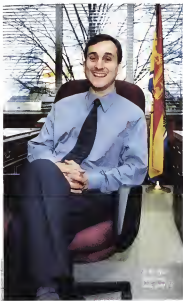
# Bernard Lord's 200 days

The New Brunswick premier fulfilled 19 of 20 campaign promises. Now the job really starts

By John DeMont

It could have been worse. Bernard Lord could have given in to his youthful exuberance and ignored the advice around the policy table during last spring's New Brunswick election campaign. The provincial Conservative leader originally wanted his party's platform to include a vow to implement a grab bag of election promises within 100 days of taking office, in the unlikely event the Tories defied the ruling Liberals. Instead, Lord listened to the voices of reason and agreed to extend the deadline for change to 200 days. Good thing, too. His party scored a stunning upset, taking 44 of 55 seats last June. And meetings even that scaled-back schedule pushed him to the brink: after Lord missed a few days of work in October, a Toronto newspaper speculated that the strain had given him a nervous breakdown.

His absence was, in reality, due to a bout of flu. But many rights, Lord's mission in the last vehicle in the parking lot behind the government buildings. His heavy workload has even reduced the premier to working out at home, instead of his usual fitness regimen of ball hockey and racquetball. Late work, though, all this effort paid off—kind of. When nine run out on Jan. 6—day 200—Lord had crossed 19 of his 20 campaign promises off his list. The last was the most bestselling: taking the tolls off a new stretch of four-lane highway between Fredericton and Moncton. The best he could do by deadline time was an agreement-in-principle with the road construction



company operating the toll booths—but to deal with the lenders who financed the bonds for the project. No matter, said Lord, 34, who thrashed off a mid-campaign saw-tooth if he didn't live up to all his

promises. "The toll deal is more complicated than we thought," he told *Mediacorp*. "But I think the people of New Brunswick will forgive us. We can put our record of keeping our commitments up against any government's and



With Prime Minister Jean Chretien and Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard, hardworking

of the 44 members had over us on the government benches in the legislature (the Liberals, under Thériault and McKenna, held power for 12 years, really sweeping the opposition

free) proud of what we've achieved." Even if the real battles are just beginning for his green but hardworking government.

The first 200 days were just a warm-up to Lord made good on pledges designed to jump-start his administration. Among them: pouring \$1 million into a new fund for teaching supplies, creating 300 new nursing jobs, hiring 100 new teaching assistants raising the minimum wage by 25 cents to \$5.75 per hour, and beginning a review of more than 200 government agencies, boards and commissions and 800 government programs. Opposition politicians claimed that some of the initiatives, such as establishing a new policy of not separating couples into different nursing homes, were window dressing, and they gave Lord a failing grade. But New Brunswickers appear to appreciate the symbolism of a government and premier willing to be held accountable for their campaign commitments.

In fact, a poll released in December by Halifax-based Corporate Research Associates put the government's approval rating at 70 per cent. Lord's personal popularity stood at 49 per cent, miles ahead of the 14 per cent given to Opposition leader Camille Thériault, who took over from long-time Liberal premier Frank McKenna in 1998 and spent a mere year in office before Lord ousted him in the June 7 provincial election. "People seem to have taken to him," says Don Desnoes, a political science professor at the University of New Brunswick. "They think he has done what he promised. It's nice to see a government do something, even if most of it is fluff."

The 200 Days of Change Action Plan appears to have been a winner in other ways as well. Analysts say the party's policy agenda provided safe, on-the-job training for a government in which only two

out of the legislature during McKenna's first term, Lord said last week that he also wanted to send out a clear message that his government was "about change and commitment." The one drawback: a lingering perception that the Tories may have been simply stalling for time—and actually lack a larger vision beyond the disparate collection of short-term campaign promises. As Elizabeth Weir, the sole New Democrat in the New Brunswick legislature puts it: "I want to know what this government is really about and what they intend to do for the next 20 years."

Lord promises quick answers. "With the first 200 days out of the way, he intends to swiftly move onto the next phase of his game plan—a mixture of cutbacks, structural reforms and targeted spending, designed to reform the province. The provincial budget, he says, aimed for last February or early March, will include the first personal-cut in New Brunswick history. Although he vows no hospitals will be closed, Lord also intends to restructure the provincial health-care system to make it "more patient focused and community-based." Guidance, in that case, will come from the Premier's Health Quality Council, formed last week to fulfill campaign promise number 19, and which reports directly to Lord.

Even more likely to satisfy his credentials as a reformer is Lord's goal of overhauling the entire provincial government. A team of high-level bureaucrats and cabinet ministers has already begun the mammoth review process to determine which government bodies will be chopped. "Governments cannot do everything, nor should they," Lord stresses. "The McKenna Liberals did make severe cuts—what they failed to do was eliminate things outright."

Talk like that makes public sector



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# INTERNET Shopping Guide

BY LUCY H. HARRIS

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## Canada

unions March. But Lord argues he has no choice. Last month, the province's auditor general revealed that New Brunswick ran a deficit of \$164.5-million in the 1998-1999 fiscal year, rather than a surplus of \$18.5 million as the Liberals had projected while in office. If that course continues, the Tories say the deficit will top \$400 million by 2004, further swelling the \$9.7-billion provincial debt. Chances of making up the shortfall with tax revenue seem slim: the province's 10.3 per cent unemployment rate is already sharply above the national figure of 6.9 per cent. And almost all forecasters predict New Brunswick's economy—which grew by only 2.3 per cent in 1998, compared to a national growth rate of 3.1 per cent, will lag behind most other provinces in the foreseeable future.

The tough choices ahead may mean Lord's honeymoon with the public will soon be over. So far, though, with the public, media and political opposition focused on the 200 days of change, there have been few misadventures. Lord has taken it on the chin for the Tories' inability to extricate the province from the highway toll deal. But his government has also won praise for some initiatives, such as trying to reduce outsize partnership in New Brunswick policies. Lord has banned politically motivated government advertising, cut 32 government spin doctors, and ordered his troops not to respond to harsh from the 10 Liberals and one NDP member who sit on the opposition benches.

For all that, the current young premier, more than anyone, knows that hard work and good maintenance are not going to be enough to solve New Brunswick's problems. "The people of this province do not expect us to perform miracles," he says. "What they want are real commitments and changes that will last." That means that in a second act, the government needs to prove it can deliver more than quick fixes. Otherwise, the bright promise of the fine 200 days will quickly become just a memory.



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The Osborne Village fire is a series of high-profile incidents last year



## Dousing a city's flames

After suffering through a two-year wave of arson, Winnipeggers take action

By John Nicol

North Winnipeg has many of the characteristics of tough-as-nails city neighbourhoods. Majestic elm line the streets, providing summer shade and colourful autumn canopies for the tenants of the century homes. Garages are conveniently tucked away on back lanes as a result, the houses are close to each other and the street, making it easy for people to interact with pedestrians and neighbours. But many of the homeowners were once caries for waves of Ukrainian, Polish and German immigrants earlier this century have been neglected. And the neighbourhood became known for its prostitution, drugs, crime and, most

recently, arson—fires in abandoned homes, vacant lots and large garbage bins that line the back lanes. Even a few of the elms have suffered.

Yet the residents of the North End are now feeling more hopeful. Because of Winnipeg's war on arson, which began 10 weeks ago, the fire has decreased dramatically. Along with that has come a cleanup effort in the North End to remove potential kindling and to show arsonists that someone cares about the community. Abandoned properties and back lanes have been swept clean, graffiti has been erased or painted over, and discoloured houses have been properly boarded up, some receiving the week-long ball, others renovation. "Everybody

had such a negative attitude before," says Margaret Chumand, 43, who has lived in the neighbourhood for 20 years. "Now we feel it's safe to walk around most times of the day." Much of that has been thanks to local volunteers. "If you have pride, you can have a neighbourhood again," says Darrell Warren, who has lived in the area for 35 years and who now participates in volunteer foot patrols in the community. "We're in the North End, we will rise from the ashes."

Those ashes have been the result of a surge in arson over the past two years—the rate in Winnipeg ballooned from 26 incidents per 100,000 people in 1997 to 63 in 1999, while the number of arsons the police investigated that up from 348 in 1998 to 428 in 1999. These figures, coupled with the severity of the blazes set at churches, cultural centres and businesses as well as prisons,

have been giving Winnipeg a reputation as Canada's arson capital. But the city administration has now cracked down. In 10 weeks, workers have collected 1,300 tonnes of garbage from 900 properties, and inspected 27,600 homes and businesses, identifying 800 of them as fire hazards. Winnipeg's Arson Strike Force, a joint police-fire-fighter effort, has conducted 284 investigations, made 63 arrests and laid 576 charges for arson, some in cases dating back to 1997.

Three-quarters of the suspects are youths, so 15 school gyms, three public swimming pools and two recreation centres have extended their hours to keep children off the streets. An intensive school education program also began last week, but authorities already feel the effort has been a success. December, the second month of the onslaught, saw a 25 per cent drop in deliberately set fires. "We've made a huge difference," Winnipeg Fire Chief Wla Shoemaker told *Manitoba*, "but we're only just begun. A lot of the conditions that have led to this situation have taken decades to develop, and will likely take at some time to overcome."

The city's efforts were spurred on by the realization that arson was, in fact, a city-wide problem. As well, some of the blazes of 1999 were hard to ignore. The year began with the Jan. 16 shooting of the victim, 115-year-old Leland Ford next to City Hall. A fire was also set in an antique store in the historic Exchange District, and several churches suffered damage from arson, including the 146-year-old St. James Church, the oldest wooden chapel in Western Canada. Then on Nov. 21, four weeks into the anti-arson campaign, a \$1-million blaze destroyed four businesses in Osborne Village, a trendy section of town near the home of Mayor Glen Murray and around the corner from Lloyd Acoorah's constituency office.

City officials take issue with the "arson capital" label—arbitrarily some other Canadian cities, they note, Winnipeg is closer to being an arson statistics. They do admit, however, that many-city social conditions—housing problems, unemployment, poverty



Worried, many of the suspects are youths reacting to inner-city social conditions

and a large transient population—have provided a breeding ground for young arsonists who strike back at their despair with flames. "My peers right across North America tell me the problem of older neighbourhoods is fairly universal," says Marc Prud'homme, a firefighter who now interviews and educates youthful arsonists as part of the city's Youth Fire Stop program. "Regardless, we have some pretty heartbreaking stories out there."

In his caseload, Prud'homme is currently dealing with more than a dozen fire-starting youths under 12. Among them is one five-year-old whose brother and father have both, in the past, been sentenced for arson, and an 11-year-old who has been sexually abused for most of his life. Prud'homme paid it to direct the youths into proper treatment before they graduate from ignoring garbage bins to setting buildings ablaze. So far, the rate of recidivism among youths

who have gone through the seven-year-old program is only two per cent. "In most cases, nobody has taught them the dangers of fire," says Prud'homme. "Often, they live with a single parent who is so busy trying to make a life, no one is there to teach them right from wrong. In a crisis, the kids become so frustrated and angry, unable to articulate their problem because their schooling is limited, that they light fires to be discovered. Most of these kids I come across socially admit to it. They're more than happy to give information, anything you want to know. They show no remorse."

The depth of the social problems is why Wayne Helguon, executive director of the city's social planning council, feels the anti-arson campaign is a

good first step—but one that must be followed by much more. "Manitoba has Canada's highest child poverty rate for children under 6, and we have more than double the national rate of children in the care of the province," Helguon told *Manitoba*. "We've had so many cutbacks over the 1990s, maybe it's time to reinvest in our youth." The current effort has already involved a hefty price tag: Gad Stephens, Winnipeg's chief administrative officer and the catalyst for the anti-arson campaign, says the city has spent more than \$2 million of taxpayers' money on the initiative. But with annual damage estimates for arson hovering around \$31 million, the costlier in money well spent.

Next month, she will bring together 150 community groups to determine what is working—and where the city should bring more resources in money. "I hope the final long-term strategy will include all three levels of government and the residents," says Stephens. "I think the city of Winnipeg has been well-known for its sense of community, our ability to mobilize 20,000 volunteers for Pan-American Games, our ability to fight the flood of the century. That's why I think the arson can be beaten." So far, there does indeed appear to be reason for optimism. ■

### Playing with fire

Winnipeg has experienced a staggering increase in the number of arsons per 100,000 residents in the past five years



GRAPH BY JEFFREY HARRIS FOR THE WISCONSIN JOURNAL

# Edward Greenspan

## for the defence

A high-flying lawyer wins cases and respect

By Rae Carroll

When he stands, his cravat cuffs sometimes bunch up on top of his shoes, either because his pants are too long or his suspenders incur adjustment. On that occasion, his white shirt, the collar undone and the buttons unbuttoned by a passion for junk food, looks as though he has slept in it. His necktie is a stringy ribbon of indiscriminate colour that wends across his chest from the off-kilter knot under his right ear to his left. Eddie Greenspan is clearly not among the razor-sharpened criminal defence lawyers "I'm just not a doctored," he says. "I got these arms."

But he is among the best at what he does—perhaps the best in Canada. During the past 30 years, this son of a Niagara Falls, Ont., scrap dealer has built a formidable reputation for winning high-profile cases in courtrooms from one end of the country to the other. "I may have some natural talent, but I don't rely on it," Greenspan says. "That's why I work 18 hours a day."

That combination of ability and stamina, says Halifax defence counsel Joel Paak, has likely made Greenspan the "top criminal lawyer in the country. When Eddie walks into a courtroom, they treat him with a great deal of respect and he probably gets away with things that local lawyers couldn't." *Retired Supreme Court*

of Canada justice William Estey calls Greenspan "an extremely good criminal lawyer and the leader in that bar." And Toronto trial lawyer Harvey Stenberg says "No-one works harder and is more deadly in the courtroom." The plaudits are widespread, but they are not universal. One exception: Toronto litigation counsel Ian Osterbridge, who acknowledges Greenspan's talent but thinks western criminal defence lawyer Austin Cooper, also of Toronto, is more capable.

Among Greenspan's latest headline-making challenges representing Daniel Wein, the 19-year-old Israeli soldier charged (along with three other teenagers) with second-degree murder in the Nov. 14 beating death of 15-year-old Mami Bursawski in a Toronto park. Greenspan is also pursuing a \$1-million wrongful-arrest lawsuit he launched in mid-November against Canada and Germany on behalf of Ruthven Schmitz, a central figure in the long-running Airbus scandal who was jailed in Germany on suspicion of income tax evasion and fraud. The case alleges that the 65-year-old Schmitz's arrest by the RCMP last Aug. 31 was illegal because he has not been formally charged with anything.

In yet another case, Greenspan has asked the Supreme Court of Canada for a stay of proceedings

in nine sexual misconduct charges against former Nova Scotia premier Gerald Regan. In December, 1998, Regan was acquitted of eight other more serious offences, including rape.

At 55, Greenspan's involvement, knee-buckling schedule (he has from 30 to 50 active cases at any given time) and successful use of the media have made him a kind of courtroom superstar. He has become the Canadian counterpart of American celebrity lawyers like B. Lee Bailey (defender of Albert DeSalvo, the Boston Strangler) and Alan Dershowitz, who not only got Claus von Bülow acquitted of attempting to murder his wife but has appeared in *Reverend of Fortune*, the 1990 movie based on the case.

While Greenspan has yet to follow Dershowitz onto the silver screen, he has scored well on radio and television. From 1982 to 1990, he was the host-narrator of the award-winning *The Scale of Justice*, a CBC FM series on famous Canadian trials. Then in 1994, the CBC switched Greenspan and *Scale* to television, where it won a Gemini Award in 1993 as best show of the year. "I like going on TV and radio to discuss issues," he says. "Do I like the publicity that brings? I'm not shy about it—sure, I don't mind it, I get tickled by it."

Publicity has not always been amusing. In 1966, when

In the library of his Toronto office: "I may have some natural talent, but I don't rely on it—I work 18 hours a day!"



Greenspan was still a student, his firm dispatched him to take notes at hearings in Toronto of a royal commission into the collapse of the Atlantic Acceptance Corp. Ltd., a finance company. The sessions were so tedious that he fell asleep and the judge had to ask a court attendant to wake him up. "It was the first time I ever got my name in the paper," says Greenspan. But not the last time he dozed in court. Once, during a trial revolving around the theft of more than 800 cars parts, a prosecution witness began reading all the serial numbers onto the record and Greenspan soon nodded off. "Fifty-five minutes later when I'm just starting to waken, my partner wakes me up and the first thing I hear is B-20, O-17 and I say 'Briggs!' Everybody laughed except the judge, who hadn't heard me."

His 12 years in broadcasting gave Greenspan national exposure and probably brought him clients—many of

them prominent or wealthy—that he would not otherwise have had. And while he wins most of his cases, there have been some spectacular defeats. One was the four-month-long first-degree murder trial in 1986 of Helmut Bushman, owner of a string of neighbourhoods Ontario running homes, who paid Greenspan nearly \$1 million to defend him. But Bushman was convicted in the contract-killing of his wife despite Greenspan's argument that the Crown had failed to establish a motive.

Greenspan's critics at the nodger end of the legal profession claim he unashamedly uses the media to score points for the people he represents. To that accusation, Greenspan reacts hotly. "I have never gone to the press to get them involved in a case of mine," he says. "If they're already involved, then I have no hesitation in dealing with the press and using it to help my client."

So what does this help cost the client

by the hour? "I'm not going to tell you," he implies. "You get yourself charged with a criminal offence and I'll be my pleasure to tell you, but I'm not cheap by any stretch of the imagination." (He admits to charging between \$5,000 and \$7,500 for an unpaid-driving defence.) However, he says, "If somebody hasn't got the money and convinces me of the justice of their case, then the money doesn't matter and I'll take the case for nothing."

About 10 years ago, the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce closed its branch at Jarvis and King streets in downtown Toronto. In 1995, Greenspan bought the beleaguered grey-stone three-storey building, crisscrossed the mts and spent a rumored \$750,000 on renovations, including a chandelier the size of a Volkswagen that hangs from the library's metre-high ceiling. He keeps the



With Gerald and Carole Regan, attorney and a busy-banking schedule

## Many people in the legal community consider Greenspan Canada's top criminal lawyer

ground floor for himself, his four partners labour upstairs.

At one end of the firm's richly polished boardroom table that could comfortably seat more than a dozen people, Greenspan is perching the plastic wrapping from a plastic salmon sandwich. "Left to my own device, I would go to a fast-food place three times a day," he says. He reads his wife, Suey, with introducing him to fine dining and, with equally mixed results, to literature, classical music and a love of travel. He reads a lot of crime novels ("I'm embarrassed to admit all this") by authors such as Ruth Rendell, Elmore Leonard and Patricia Cornwell. "I also read the paper pages every day," says Greenspan, "because it's an occupational hazard that a lot of judges and Crown attorneys know a lot about sports and I can't stand not knowing what they're talking about."

Suey Greenspan has had less success with music. "Once we were in Rome and we went to an outdoor opera and saw *Attila*, and there were like 30 elephants onstage and I thought this was unbelievable," Greenspan says. "So I made her go the next night to see what a *vi*. Carverin Something—and there were sheep all over and I loved it.

So we came back and I decided to become an opera fan, but when we went to one where there were no animals, I fell asleep. So I started going to *La Traviata*."

Among his colleagues, Greenspan's quest for the perfect hamburger is almost as noteworthy as his skills in the courtroom. Calgary lawyer John Bascom remembers the time about 10 years ago when a friend acted in Greenspan's co-located in a local case. "They'd work until two o'clock in the morning," Bascom says, "and then Eddie would want hamburgers and they had to drive around town looking for a place, which wasn't that easy to find back then." Halifax's Joel Pink says that when Greenspan was done for the Regan trial, "he told me he had found the best restaurant in Halifax for hamburgers. He had probably eaten in all of them, but they were not on the top of my list of places to dine. I think his favourite place later burned down."

Greenspan's search race through the justice system has broadened the legal landscape with anecdotes. During the Regan trial, says Strosberg, Greenspan was cross-examining a witness "who began replying to a question by saying, 'Well, Eddie.'" Greenspan, says

Strosberg, replied by saying, "to you, Tim Mr. Greenspan and you're Mr. So-and-so." About 15 minutes later, she said she'd heard something to the effect that he was the best criminal lawyer in the country—and he said, "Now you can call me Eddie."

The Greenspans have two daughters. Samantha, 21, is in a two-year master's program in a museum at New York University. Juliana, 27, practices criminal law in Chicago. Their parents inhabit the empty nest—a mortgage-free, million-dollar home in an exclusive north Toronto enclave. "That's what Suey wanted, that's what the kids wanted," Greenspan says. "It doesn't mean much to me."

Not, it seems, does anything else, except his family and the law. He lectures University of Toronto law students, and has for more than 20 years been the editor of *Afternoon Annual Criminal Code*, the criminal lawyer's bible. He scorns "ambitious lawyers who want to act only for innocent people," and claims that Canadian firms about crime are aroused by American TV ("we're not a violent society").

But what really worries him, Greenspan says, are politically correct trends in the criminal justice system towards defining and protecting the rights of "so-called victims—and I'm talking about children and women." Crown attorneys, he says, no longer spend time trying to demonstrate a complainant's credibility, instead, Greenspan says, "we have a rule of law now that says children don't lie because victims don't lie. Where we are in a system in which if a child says something, then you automatically believe it? I would have thought that the rules you would automatically not believe it. Somebody cries rape, they're not lying, they can't be lying, so anybody who's accused has to be lying." Does all this discourage him? "No, it makes me angry," Greenspan says. "If we do not defend against these bad ideas, we're going to lose our liberties, as sure as sure can be."

# Introducing

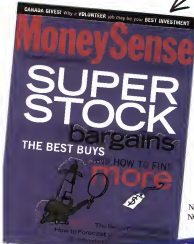
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## A new wave of Chinese migrants

The container ship *California Jupiter* was supposed to have docked in Seattle but authorities diverted it to Vancouver, claiming the port was full. There, Canadian officials uncovered an illicit cargo: 25 Chinese seamen. But U.S. authorities also had their hands full. In Seattle, they apprehended another 26 container stowaways in Long Beach, Calif. 18 others were taken into custody. Those detentions earlier last week brought renewed attention to the problem of Chinese smuggling—and highlighted the differences between Canadian and U.S. policies. The United States may deport the new arrivals within weeks if it rejects their asylum claims. In Canada, requests for refugee status are only the beginning of a long claims process.

Of the nearly 600 smuggled Chinese



The *California Jupiter* carrying an illicit cargo

who arrived off British Columbia last summer, two have filed successful refugee claims, 74 have been rejected, four have withdrawn their claims and none 650 are still being processed. No one has yet been deported (reportedly, some are now claiming they are members of the persecuted Falun Gong sect). In fact, 67 have disappeared—probably to the United States. *At the same time* the deportation of 10 Chinese girls aged 14 to 18 who were apprehended last week near Wallaceton, Ont., close to Detroit. Authorities charged a mother and son from the nearby Walpole Island First Nations reserve with smuggling offences.

## Manning puts his leadership on the line

**Reform party** Leader Preston Manning says that if the concept of a United Alternative is voted down at a party referendum this spring, he will call a leadership convention and will not run. In a letter to 65,000 supporters, Manning wrote that if Reformers vote against the UA—a proposed national party, excluding disaffiliated Conservatives—and express "a desire to simply consolidate our current base in the West, I would not be inclined or able to lead such a retreat." The letter was sent three weeks before the party's convention in Ottawa.

## Copps's hot seat

**Heritage Minister** Sheila Copps and her husband Austin Thomas found themselves embroiled in a controversy over seating arrangements on an Air Transat flight from St. John's, Nfld., to Toronto. The mix-up occurred when the airline double-booked the plane to Copps—and her husband had upgraded—and to a wheelchair-bound customer. According to some witnesses

and a post-flight report, Copps and her husband became abusive when asked to change back to economy class. But she and Copps and her husband asked court properly. The minister issued a statement outlining allegations she had refused to vacate her seat for a disabled person. "If we had been told about it, we would have immediately offered to give up our seat," she said. Air Transat responded, saying Copps had been in her rightful seat.

## Sentencing a killer

It was, at long last, an end of sorts to a case that has haunted the country for three decades. Last week, Larry Fisher was sentenced to life in prison for the 1969 sex slaying of Saskatoon nursing aide Gail Miller. But the event reopened old wounds. Because Fisher was sentenced under the Criminal Code in place in 1969, he could be released on parole in 10 years or his (under current law, people convicted of first-degree murder cannot get parole before serving 25 years, although they can apply for a judicial review after 15 years).

That was a glaring prospect for lawyer Herb Welch, who represents the man who was wrongly convicted in 1970 of Miller's murder. David Milgaard, 47, spent 23 years in prison for a crime he didn't commit. Welch noted, "The idea of the guy who did it getting less than David is a ridiculous concept." So did Fisher, 50, his spent 25 years in prison—but for seven years. A jury in Regina, Sask., convicted him of Miller's murder last November after hearing expert testimony that DNA taken from semen found on Miller's clothing matched Fisher's. His lawyer and Fisher now intend to appeal the conviction.

## A daughter in court

**Alberta's Premier** Ralph Klein has always guarded his privacy. But last week the premier's personal life came under scrutiny when his second child from his first marriage, Angie Klein-Morris, 36, briefly appeared in court to face charges of obstruction of justice and public mischief. They stem from the fact that Klein-Morris made an assault complaint several months ago against her husband, 37-year-old Richard Morris—and then changed her story.

She is scheduled to return to court on Jan. 28 to enter a plea. Because of its high profile, the case has been handed to the special prosecutions branch. Klein has not commented, saying through a spokesman that "he considers this a family matter." But it has focused attention on troubles in the Klein clan. The premier himself afflicted at his daughter's 1997 wedding—but the groom is now under investigation for bigamy. Morris also has a history of assaulting Klein-Morris, and is currently in prison for theft.

## Child prostitution

Residents of Saskatchewan were shocked when social workers told an all-party committee that children as young as 7 or 8 were working as prostitutes in the province's cities. The number of children under 18 selling sex, most of them aboriginals, could be in the hundreds in both Regina and Saskatoon, some experts said. Regina police spokesmen agreed child prostitution did exist, but said social workers had rarely utilized the numbers.

## Talbot trial on hold

Court proceedings against a Talbot, Alta., boy charged with shooting another at his high school last April were adjourned until April 5 for medical reasons. The 15-year-old accused has suffered brain damage as a result of a stroke last November, which was brought on by complications following heart surgery for a birth defect.

## Yashin suit to proceed

The Supreme Court of Ontario ruled that the \$27.5-million lawsuit filed against Alexei Yashin of the Ottawa Senators on behalf of season-ticket holders may proceed. Yashin, who was to make almost \$5.5 million this year but is demanding more than \$12 million, has refused to honour his contract and is currently in Switzerland.

## Hitting a wrong note

Canada Customs officials at Niagara Falls, Ont., refused to let a piano owned by a Belgian pianist into the country because it has very keys. The 173-year-old instrument was to be used by Tom Beghin, a Los Angeles university professor, during a Toronto recording session. He had to leave the piano, which customs officers said constituted a ban on the unlicensed export of ivory, in a motel room.

## The fight against tobacco

According to reports last week, Ottawa is preparing to launch tobacco companies to finance more graphic warnings, such as photos of cancerous lungs, on cigarette packages. Health Minister Allan Rock is expected to announce the measure this month.

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# Russia's Saviour?

Long-suffering voters seem ready to put their trust in tough-guy leader Vladimir Putin, even if they know almost nothing about him

**Vladimir Putin** is, almost literally, a cipher. Russian journalists have described their country's new acting president as a "dark horse," a "black box" and a "shadow." An on-RGB spy—who reportedly once overheard the theft of advanced Western technology from a secret base in East Germany—has a biography with many missing pages. And lately, his Kremlin crated image has been changing almost daily. As Russia's tough-guy prime minister and architect of the ruble's rise against superstar aches in Chechnya, he was depicted

on state TV in a variety of reaches: power to a pale black belt throwing and pinning a much larger opponent, flying in an Su-26 ground attack fighter, and supervising a missile launch from a nuclear-powered cruiser. But since Boris Yeltsin's shock New Year's Eve resignation, catapulted him into the presidency's chair, with elections set for March 26, a different Putin has appeared. Last week, he was shown sentimentally wiping away a tear as he compared the ailing Yeltsin with his own father, and spoke of his hopes for a kinder, gentler millennium to come. His office claims he recently composed supportively by e-mail with French actress Brigitte Bardot about sexual rights.

At 47, youthful for a Russian leader, Putin has come from virtually nowhere to grab Russia's supreme political prize. When he was appointed last August, he was Yeltsin's fifth prime minister in less than two years, and was widely expected to head down the same dead-end road as the others. But Putin won public acclaim with his hard report on terrorist bombs that killed 300 Russians in September—a full-scale military invasion of Chechnya, the tiny rebel republic accused of harbouring the bombers. This war is currently bogged down with bloody street fighting in the Chechen capital of Grozny, but surveys show Putin is still widely popular with ordinary Russians. "The war in Chechnya made Putin, and if he's not careful it can make him just as quickly," says Pavel Felgenhauer, a military expert with the daily *Sobiesky* newspaper.



Putin with Israeli President Ezer Weizman, joyful

"The battlefield situation down there is turning very ugly." Yet after nearly a decade of national terror, social decline and poverty, many voters seem ready for a strong hand. "All Russians are sick of the fact that Russia is humiliated, treated, asked for handouts," said Gen. Vladimir Shumakov, who commanded the Russian forces in western Chechnya until a shambol of generals last week. "Putin is a symbol behind whom many people march. There is no doubt I am in the first rank." Thanks to the war, Putin has been able to project a powerful image while saying very little about what he will actually do if he wins a full four-year term.

For now, Kremlin officials speak of Putin's confirmation by voters in March in more like a coronation than an election. Even the first opponent to officially throw his hat into the ring, liberal Grigory Yavlinsky, said it would probably not be a serious proposition to suggest that Putin can be beaten. Commentator leader Genadiy Zyuganov, who took 42 per cent of the vote in a tight 1996 race

against Yeltsin, is likely to run again. But the tough-talking Putin, who stands for average state power and more social welfare, threatens to steal much of his thunder. Last month's elections are Putin's panderer at a prize minister, Yegor Gerasimov, and Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov, whose party fared miserably in last month's parliamentary election. Engelbert Alexander Lebed, long touted as Russia's Napoleon-in-waiting, says he isn't even planning to run against Putin.

So who is this guy? For the floor-turning, contender for leadership of a huge nuclear-armed state, it is something how little is known about Putin. His official biography says he was born in Leningrad in 1952, and graduated from the law faculty of Leningrad University. But his 17-year career with the foreign intelligence branch of the Soviet RGB remains an information blank. Officially, he was based in Dresden, East Germany, for several years during the 1980s, in charge of fostering "German-Soviet friendship." But so-



Putin (center) celebrating Orthodox Christmas in Moscow last week, projecting a powerful image while saying little

conding to Stratfor, a private think-tank on intelligence issues in Austin, Tex., Putin was an economic spy tasked with helping to steal Western technology and managerial expertise to modernize the Soviet Union's lagging industrial machines.

Analyses say his mentor was Yuri Andropov, the aforementioned RGB chief who ascended to supreme power in 1982 for a brief 15-month spell. No democrat, Andropov hoped to revive Soviet economic might through increased workplace discipline and purified Western techniques. "Putin is a man of the Andropov generation, which means he believes in the guiding role of an elite of professional and pragmatic experts who wield state power for the good of the nation," says Vladimir Perelshin, an analyst with the Independent Institute for Social and National Problems in Moscow. "This is the most essential fact about him."

In 1991, as the Soviet Union was collapsing, Putin ended from the RGB and went to work for the democratic mayor of St. Petersburg, Anatoly Sobchak, and within two years rose to become deputy mayor of the city. Putin's old mentor-turned-cousin as a liberal-minded reformer due from this period, but Stratfor says he probably never broke his links with the intelligence service. Sobchak was defeated in a 1996 election, and subsequently fled Russia under a cloud of corruption charges. But Putin moved to Moscow, where he was taken into Yeltsin's administration. He worked first for Kremlin property department chief Pavel Borodko—who is today at the centre of a Swiss police probe into Kremlin kickbacks and money-laundering—but later rose to become deputy head of the president's influential security council. In July 1998,

Yeltsin, looking for a loyal man to head the Federal Security Service—the renamed RGB—banned Putin the job.

Putin's wary-warrior background, and his unbroken close links to the Yeltsin circle, have prompted speculation that he is a puppet of Kremlin insiders. Few doubt that Yeltsin, whose term was due to end in June, quit only in order to take advantage of Putin's high popularity to propel him into the presidency. In gratitude, Putin signed a decree granting Yeltsin blanket immunity from prosecution for any wrongdoing during his corruption-ridden eight years in power. Yeltsin then embarked on a joyful trip to Israel and the West Bank in his new role as Russia's chief spokesman.

But in truth there is very little to go on, and what there is suggests that Putin will run out to be very much his own man. He quickly fired Yeltsin's powerful daughter Tatyana Dyachenko from her Kremlin adviser's post. And his 5,500-word mission statement, published on the Kremlin Web site ([www.government.ru/putin080198](http://www.government.ru/putin080198)), is a carefully critical of the economic and political drift of Yeltsin's rule. It warns that Russians are fed up with experiments, either of the communist or liberal sort, and that what they want is a strong state to provide order, security and economic growth. Political analyst Tatyana Maslennikova in the weekly *Voprosi MIRA* that while Russians know little about Putin, "what is common is that they don't feel like they need to know. It is enough for the people that he appears to be tough, honest and principled." The man who is an enigma seems to inspire a serious.

Fred White in Moscow



Gwynne-Vaughan in Dili's destroyed CARE headquarters: 'I see the hope'

struction. I see the hope," he says. "I don't want to go back to more bullets and bombs."

Gwynne-Vaughan arrived in East Timor on Oct. 19, when an Australian-led, Canadian-supported international peacekeeping force was starting to restore order after the violence that followed an Aug. 30 vote in the former Portuguese colony for independence from Indonesia. The rampage of killing and destruction by pro-Indonesian militias left burnt-out shells of most buildings and forced much of the population to flee. Gwynne-Vaughan's experience in providing emergency humanitarian aid in the most difficult situations was exactly what CARE needed.

What goes around, comes around. Years before, doing aid work was exactly what he needed. In 1981, the Vancouver native was a high-school dropout working in an Ottawa valve factory when a friend told him about Canada World Year's, a program that gave people from the Third World with Canadian interest in development work. He quit the factory and ended up in a small town in the impoverished West African nation of Mali. The experience whetted his appetite both for working overseas, and for making more of his life. "It was so evident how many opportunities I had back in Canada and I guess I felt I was squandering them."

After the Mali assignment, Gwynne-Vaughan returned to Canada and settled on aid work as a way to travel and get paid for it. Doing a four-year B.S. in international development at the University of Toronto, he spent a year in southwest Zaire, working on a Canada World Year's water project.

In a village of 100,000 people living in mud huts, razing a massive porridge called *fufu* twice a day ("it tastes like uncooked bread dough but not quite as sticky"), Gwynne-Vaughan became hooked on an existence where everything was a challenge. "It was pretty high-energy, high-stress, much faster than the 9-to-5 grind at home."

Back in Canada, he finished his degree, became a ski bum in Whistler,

B.C., for a winter, then started a master's degree in geography at Carleton University in Ottawa, all the while pursuing aid agencies for work. After calling CARE Canada every month, he landed a post in Angola in September, 1989, if he could be ready in a week. "My girlfriend at the time wasn't too happy about it," he says.

He was in Angola three years, starting his stretch on how to provide aid in a place where "war was going on big-time" and radio communications were frequently interrupted by the sound of bombs. Much of what he learned in university had to be discarded. "When people with guns were so close your car," he says, "some of the theory goes out the window." He was evacuated in



Getting a CARE package: shattered trust

September, 1992, just before the rebels blew up the airport, but returned to coordinate emergency aid for a few months before transferring to Mozambique for a year.

Then came the west African state of Liberia, with a French agency, Action Coeur La Faim. "I thought Angola was bad, but it was a cakewalk compared to Liberia," he says. "It was *Gloster's Greengarden Africa*" in one incident, which stole 72 vehicles from aid agencies in a single day. Medicines, food—everything was fair game for thieves. Another time, when he was travelling with a minor U.S. official, the car was stopped by a boy as a checkpoint who was convinced they were spies deserving death. But the kid with the assault rifle was still a kid, and he had a slingshot in his back pocket. To

Gwynne-Vaughan's amazement, the American dared the young soldier to let him try to fix a distant target with it. The American hit the mark, and the impressed youngster let them go. After high-adrenaline incidents like that, on top of four evacuations, Gwynne-Vaughan decided it was time "for a change of scenery." He returned to Canada for about 18 months to rebuild his life with his horseback and finish his master's degree.

And now, after two short stints in northern Brazil providing emergency aid to people stricken by drought, Gwynne-Vaughan is in East Timor, where the job only grows. As the United Nations begins the task of preparing East Timor for independence, he hopes to put aside what he knows of running food convoys past checkpoints, gunners and help build a country "fill like morning focus from emergency aid to development," he says.

How long he will stay is unclear. The posting is only for him: his Brazilian-born partner, Darlene, whom he met in 1998 in South America, remains in Ottawa but will join him later this month, at least temporarily. Gwynne-Vaughan acknowledges how difficult it is to maintain relationships during frequent and prolonged absences, and his years away from home have exacted a personal cost. "This job is really good to me—it's a very hospital place—but I can't do it at the expense of the rest of my life," he says.

Now that Gwynne-Vaughan is completing, "I count the things I have gained, not the things I have lost," he says. For him, happiness has been watching an emaciated African child enter an emergency feeding camp and come out 28 days later, laughing and running in the yard. Now, he looks forward to seeing the first maize crops grow in Timor from seed that CARE is distributing. All the frustrations and hardships fade in significance as such things. "They are one of those moments," he says. Gwynne-Vaughan has already done so, happily paying a price that has brought him a life's worth of contentment. ■

## Finding contentment on high adrenaline

To a Canadian aid worker in East Timor, happiness comes from helping people in the world's worst trouble spots

By Warren Caragata in Dili

For Ottawa's Steve Gwynne-Vaughan, the problems just keep coming. Maize problems, stomach-churning problems. Those easily fixed and those that will defy solution long after he has left his post as director of the CARE International program in the devastated land of East Timor. Trucks, a simple matter really—just buy them. But the crisis in Timor has led to a run on three-tonne trucks. From Sydney, Australia, to Singapore, there's hardly a three-ton-

ner to be found. Large vehicles, he warns, will be so heavy for Timor's poorly maintained roads during the rainy season. His local staff, like just about everyone else in Timor, have seen their homes destroyed, families shattered. They need not only places to live, but trauma counselling. To pay them, he needs to import money—there are no banks. Then, there is the over-maintained and poorly equipped port in Dili. Shipping companies are threatening to stop unloading vessels if they cannot be unloaded more quickly. And, of

course, the biggest problem of all: trying to help the people of East Timor rebuild their economy, and their lives. "It's a bit frustrating," says Gwynne-Vaughan, gold ring in his left ear, as he sits in a swivel chair surveying the countless acres in the mud-paved parking lot outside CARE's Dili compound. "You see the need, but you can't respond as quickly as you'd like."

Some people might find the hassles too much, especially when there is no life outside work—home is a sleeping pad and mosquito net in the office, with a laptop on the back. But for 37-year-old Gwynne-Vaughan, who manages to appear at once calm and coiled, jovial and serious, Timor is not much worse than what he has seen in an aid career spanning 18 years and three continents. And so far in Timor, unlike previous postings in Liberia and Angola, no one has pointed a gun at him in his face in anger, and no one has murdered any of his colleagues. Despite the terrible damage, there is a sense of optimism that he welcomes. "Some people see the de-

## Ordering Elián back to Cuba

Cuban-American leaders have temporarily put a protest campaign on hold, shifting their focus to other means of blocking the return to Cuba of six-year-old refugee Elián González. Last week, more than 80 people were arrested when demonstrators, mainly Cuban exiles, jammed Miami's roads and blockaded the port to protest a decision by the U.S. immigration and naturalization service to give the child back to his father in Cuba by Jan. 14. The boy has been staying with Miami relatives since he was found at sea clinging to an inner tube, after a boat carrying illegal migrants capsized and 11 others drowned, including his mother. Despite the INS decision, the ex-patriate Cuban community has hopes that a U.S. congressman's subpoena to have Elián appear before a congressional committee will thwart the order to ship him home.

In Havana, authorities were en-



Playing at his relatives' home, anger

ragged by the attempts to delay the boy's reunion with his father, Juan Miguel González. INS general counsel Bo Cooper said that U.S. officials decided to return Elián after interviewing the man. "We've tried to make a clear-minded decision about who can speak on Elián's behalf," he said. "We've decided that that's the father."

## India blames Pakistan for a hijacking

Indian authorities claimed four militants accused in Bombay implicated Pakistan in the Christmas Eve hijacking of Indian Airlines Flight 814. Lawyer Munir Lal Kashua Adani said the four—two Pakistanis, a Nigerian and an Indian—admitted it was a Pakistan-led operation executed by Hizb-ul-Jamiat, a guerrilla group fighting for Kashmiri independence. Pakistan, however, denied any involvement. Canadian Shirley Maclean was among 155 hostages released on Dec. 31 after India freed three Kashmiri militants from jail.

## Widening the U.S. terror probe

Abdel Hakim Tinogha, 29, an Algerian reportedly involved with others accused of a terrorist conspiracy in the United States, was charged in Seattle with illegally entering the country from Canada by walking through woods at the B.C. border. Officials quoted in *The Seattle Times* said he had links to Ahmed

Rosani, 32, of Montreal who was arrested on Dec. 14 after trying to enter the United States from B.C., allegedly carrying, bomb-making, equipment. Two others accused of connections with Rosani, Algerian Bouabdellah Chemschi, 20, and Canadian Lucas Garofalo, 35, of Montreal, were charged in Boulder, Colo., with immigration violations after being arrested on Dec. 19. Their car allegedly showed traces of explosives. They denied having links to Rosani.

## Beast cancer controversy

Danish scientists raised a storm by concluding that screening for breast cancer with mammography is useless. The scientists found precancerous flaws in six major trials that showed screening reduces cancer deaths, and backed a 1992 Canadian study that found no benefit. The paper, published in the British medical journal *The Lancet*, provoked immediate rebuttals from cancer experts who support screening.

## \$12 million for Africa

A U.S. judge awarded \$12 million to prisoners who were beaten or tortured after an uprising at Africa prison near Rochester, N.Y., in 1971. The suit was filed against New York state on behalf of 1,281 inmates who survived the five-day siege. State troopers killed 29 inmates and 10 prison-staff hostages when they stormed the prison, firing indiscriminately. Canada also mounted brutal reprisals.

## 'Living Buddha' dies

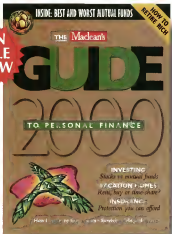
A revered, 74-year-old Tibetan Buddhist leader has fled to India from Chinese-controlled Tibet. The Karmapa Lama made the arduous journey through the Himalayas to join the exiled Dalai Lama in the northern Indian town of Dharamshala. Embroiled as the 17th Karmapa in 1992, the manager apparently left his monastery after the Chinese government would not allow him to meet with religious teachers.

## Nazi suspect leaves England

Nazi war crimes suspect Konrad Kales returned to Melbourne amid calls for the Australian government to open an investigation. Kales, 86, a Latvian-born Australian citizen, was ordered out of Britain over allegations that he had been part of a Nazi squad responsible for 30,000 deaths in Latvia. He was deported from Canada in 1997.

## Passenger train tragedy

Workers and cranes to open the wreckage of two passenger trains that collided in Norway, killing at least 16 people. One of the drivers apparently passed a red stop signal. Controllers tried to warn the drivers by cell phone but had the wrong list of numbers.



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## Business

# And Now What?

By Danylo Hawaleshko

Companies are adjusting their focus—and their spending—after Y2K was largely a non-event

He was braced for the worst. In the week between Christmas and New Year's, Brad Morningstar, 40, a shopkeeper at the Canadian Tire store in Richmond, B.C., just south of Vancouver, rang up 30 per cent more in purchases than they did in the same period in 1998. The surge, says the assistant store manager, was in part due to worried shoppers stockpiling flashlights, propane, camping stoves, collapsible water jugs and lanterns in case the Y2K computer bug wreaked havoc. It did not, and Morningstar expected that when the store reopened on Jan. 2 there would be "tons of returns." Surprisingly, there were hardly any, he says, possibly because customers kept their gas for earthquake preparedness kits—fully common on the West Coast—or simply decided to use the supplies for a future trip outdoors. "Whatever the reason," says Morningstar, glancing at the store's camping section, "this is the easiest my aisle's ever been."

Like Morningstar, people around the world did not know what to expect heading into the

21st century. As it turned out, the new year, as far as serious computer malfunctions went, was a non-event. Analysts had feared computers would confuse the date change to 2000 with the year 1900 and suffer catastrophic electronic brain seizures, leading to nuclear meltdowns, air crashes of drinking water and financial chaos. Never mind that a number of Y2K pundits, including Peter de Jager of Bloomberg, Ont., had for months been saying most everything in Western countries would continue to function normally (cost: 12,000.01 am on Jan. 1). The world, after all, had spent anywhere from \$400 billion to \$900 billion, depending on who gave the estimates, preparing for Y2K. When, basically, nothing happened, says Carl Howe, research director at technology analyst Former Research in Cambridge, Mass., angry critics pointed the finger at governments, corporations and the media for overhyping Y2K—and causing a lot of needless spending. "You can believe what you like," says Howe,

*Morningstar, a surge in sales—and uncertainty about what to expect*

"but the bottom line is the problem got fixed."

There were a few glitches, but they boiled down to the laughable compared with the dire predictions. For example, the Y2K bug was blamed for:

- 150 slot machines failing at racetracks in Delaware;
- 30,000 cash registers throughout Greece printing receipts showing the year as 1900;
- parking attendants at the University of Guelph in Ontario being forced to enter the date manually when their computer issued tickets dated 1900.

There were, however, some more serious incidents:

- the U.S. defense department lost contact with a key spy satellite system for about three hours;
- a malfunction at the Oak Ridge nuclear weapons plant in Tennessee involved a computer that tracks nuclear material (none of the material was lost).

In the sometimes perverse way in which stock markets operate, the world's investors did not take kindly to everything turning out so smoothly. When Y2K problems did not materialize to slow the booming U.S. economy, investors started to worry about inflation, sending markets around the world tumbling. But by week's end, many of the markets were recovering, some going on to post record gains.

The computer pundits who had warned of possible calamity also had a difficult time. Last week started off well enough for de Jager, one of the first to sound the Y2K alarm. With no more use for his Web page, [www.y2k2000.com](http://www.y2k2000.com), he put the domain name he owns in partnership with Houston-based Tanager Corp. up for sale on the Internet auction site eBay. The bidding went as high as a record \$15 million—but that offer turned out to be a hoax, as did several other high bids.

The bad news for de Jager was compounded by a flood of hate mail, even a death threat, from people who felt he had misled them. Why, for example, had Italy escaped without suffering a crippling system failure even though its spending was among the lowest of all Western industrial nations? De Jager did not have the answer, and admitted as in an e-mail posted on his Web page, though he stuck to his convictions. "You could place a gun to my head and threaten to pull the trigger unless I told you the 'truth' that the problem was not real—and I would steadfastly refuse," he wrote. "I know that we were right." So right, in fact, that last week de Jager contacted a woman he says he met yesterday, saying the threat, while dismissed, could still affect the month-end delivery of credit-card bills, paychecks and the like.

For all the controversy, one thing is abundantly clear now that companies are finished spending billions of dollars on Y2K fixes, they will be able to afford other high-tech spending. Michael O'Neil, general manager at Toronto-based International Data Corp. (Canada) Ltd., an information-technology consulting firm, says companies will throw a fair share of money at so-called customer-relationship-management systems, automating their sales and marketing to clients. "The next natural step," says O'Neil, "is to look at deploying technology not just to save money, or to protect one's self

against shareholder lawsuits, but to make money."

But the first quarter of 2000 will begin slowly in comparison to last year's first quarter, with companies upping their Y2K contingency plans, says Howe at Forrester Research. The next economic hurdle arrives on Feb. 29, when the leap year's extra day could trip up computer dates. Once it is out of the way, Howe expects a boom in information-technology spending, with companies spending heavily on projects put on hold because of Y2K. He says spending on e-commerce initiatives will accelerate, as will investment in so-called enterprise resource planning, which includes automating processes like financial accounting, sales-order entry and inven-

## Where the money will go

Businesses are directing the funds consumed last year by Y2K bug repairs to other areas of their budgets. Executives at 51 of the world's 2,500 biggest corporations were asked: "What projects are you spending your information-technology budget on in 2000?" Their answers, by percentage (they could give more than one answer to the total exceeds 100 per cent):



try management. "The fact that we now have bright, shiny, efficient infrastructure because we just postponed investment in it of old, crummy computer code," adds Howe, "my guess is business is going to be good for a while."

It could be particularly good for database analysts in the e-commerce field. Starting salaries are expected to jump more than 12 per cent over last year, says David Tighe, sales manager at Toronto-based RHI Consulting, a placement agency for technology professionals. The demand, says Tighe, has been "incredible. We can't put them in jobs fast enough."

Layoffs could be busy in 2000. They earlier advised company executives to do all they could to combat the Y2K bug to avoid being used by shareholders. Now, the fear is that some companies spent too much, and investors angry over the computer costs will seek legal recourse. But some firms are also coming, and signed a "millionaire's pact" in which they agree to take three weeks to negotiate settlements before resorting to litigation. If the process fails, they could still end up in court. "There's a general rule of business," says Howe. "No matter what you do, the lawyers win." Y2K—blame it on the lawyers and the media. ■



Deirdre McMurdy

## Making mergers work

**The 1990s will go down in business history as the decade of the deal.** Dealmakers, free trade, technology and globalization converged, leading to a massive restructuring in almost every sector. The result: trillions of dollars' worth of national and international mergers and acquisitions.

After several years of frenzied courting and consummation, the first decade of this century may now be devoted to making the vast number of corporate marriages work. The stakes in this integration game are high, because prolonged internal disorganization in a competitive marketplace can quickly translate into the loss of key employees, clients and suppliers—as well as precious market share. Nevertheless, despite the hype about the size and scope of recent transactions, only about 60 per cent of Canadian mergers—and less than 50 per cent of those in the United States—ultimately fulfil their potential in terms of shareholder value. According to Ken Smith, Toronto-based head of the strategic services practice at Ernst & Young, managers are also good at rationalization and cost cutting. "But when it comes to following up on the revenue opportunities from M&A," he adds, "there's much less competence."

That narrow focus on containing costs has its roots in the pronounced recession of the early 1980s and the expensive corporate wars more global firms. It has been further reinforced by increasingly proactive investors, who demand short-term share-price performance. The tendency to avoid conflict makes opinions to senior executives also contributes to that emphasis for the option to have value, the underlying share price has to climb steadily.

But the preoccupation with quantification and the bottom line poses problems when it comes to the successful integration of two companies. That's because it often fails to account adequately for softer, less measurable business costs related to corporate culture and employee satisfaction. "Culture used to be dismissed as a squishy issue," notes Smith. "That's slowly starting to change—but there's just no idea how to approach it."

Managers, especially within the dominant company, tend to assume that they can just superimpose their existing organizational template on the acquired company—perhaps with a few token nods to the quirks of the subordinate venture. Instead, they should consider that they aren't simply blending two existing firms; they are creating a new, third company.

Furthermore, the need to acknowledge and allow for the cultural differences between corporate entities—especially when they are of disparate size—is also crucial. Even with the best intentions, the relentless pursuit of synergies and harmonization often erases the very qualities that made a

company super-attractive in the first place. For example, Quaker Oats' heavy-handed approach destroyed the value in an acquisition of *Scrubie*—which it eventually sold at a huge loss. Preserving that delicate balance also represents one of the most significant challenges ahead for Air Canada's purchase of Canadian Airlines. This deal is also complicated by the fact that Canadian employees are openly hostile to working alongside their longtime rivals.

According to David Fuller, vice-president with KPMG Consulting's consumer and industrial analysis practice, one scouring mistake is senior management's failure to follow through with the integration process. After intense involvement in negotiating a deal, CEOs often tend to delegate the task of blending the firms to others. But without a single overseer, problems tend to be dealt with on an ad hoc basis, and often take longer to resolve. That weakness is compounded when there's an effort to empower both CEOs as co-heads of a new venture. "It makes the integration much more challenging—it's too confusing for everyone," says Fuller.

Another common blunder is the failure to issue the assignment to a special project, with a designated team, clear mandate and specific targets. The third error, as Paul Newman learned in his destitution in 1967's *Cool World*, is, as a failure to communicate. "As with all change in management, it's essential to get employees onside," Fuller explains. "Executives tell the deal to the board and to investors—but they often overlook their own workers."

All of these issues are even more complex when it comes to international transactions where corporate culture is shaped by different languages, laws, traditions, attitudes and regulations. Those will certainly be among the challenges in Montreal's Canadian National Railway Co. and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corp. of Fort Worth, Tex., forge ahead with their \$8.7-billion deal to create the largest railway in North America. Clear tensions have already surfaced in the high-profile auto sector: combination of Stuttgart, Germany's Daimler-Benz and Chrysler Corp. of Detroit. And it's expected that the number of deals now under negotiation between European and American carmakers with counterparts in Asia could be fraught with similar problems.

Despite the many pitfalls, however, there is no sign that the size or pace of corporate combinations is likely to slow. In fact, the high-tech sector, still characterized by a large number of small start-ups, has already been singled out as the most frontier for major rationalizations. As the trend continues unabated, employees and investors alike can only hope that senior executives soon learn that a merger, like a successful marriage, is a creative art—as well as a business proposition.

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## Publishers plan a new alliance

The publishing business can make for some improbable company. In 1994, Toronto-based Macfarlane Walter & Ross published *On the Waterfront*, *Corruption* and *Grand in the Morning* from, a best-seller by Steve Cameron. Four years later, McClelland & Stewart Inc., also of Toronto, published William Kaplan's *Presumed Guilty: Brian Mulroney, the Arctic Affair, and the Government of Canada*, which defended the former prime minister and criticized Cameron's work. Last week, the two authors were brought into the same publishing fold when Macfarlane Walter & Ross announced an alliance



Cameron's discussion

in which it will use McClelland & Stewart's sales, distribution, production and design resources. Cameron, who is negotiating a new book deal with MWR&R, and who believes Kaplan's book is flawed, says she has had "very lengthy" discussions about her feelings with both publishers, but decided to go into deal. "I haven't signed my contract yet," said Cameron, who is also a contributing editor at Macleod. "It's just that simple." M&S publisher Douglas Gibson says he sees no problem publishing authors with different views. "That," he adds, "is the nature of democracy."

## Feeling the heat over smoke alarms

The Standards Council of Canada says it will encourage Underwriters' Laboratories Canada Inc., the private, nonprofit agency that tests and approves all smoke detectors, after CTV television broadcast a documentary claiming 11 Canadian smoke alarms failing ULC approval failed to meet Canadian standards. In the WFE report, a soft cushion smouldered for more than 15 minutes, filling a room with smoke before any of the alarms sounded. Joe Hirschmugl, a ULC spokesman, and the laboratory plans to co-operate fully

with the three western provinces and Newfoundland leading the charge. According to Statistics Canada, only Manitoba showed a decrease from November, 3.1 per cent, in the seasonally adjusted index that measures the number of help-wanted ads published in newspapers in 20 cities across Canada. The index is used as a forecast of companies' intentions to hire. Meanwhile, other numbers from Statistics Canada indicate that workers are, in fact, landing jobs. The unemployment rate was 6.9 per cent in December—the same as November and the lowest in almost 20 years.

## Happy holidays

Happy holidays experienced the best holiday sales season in a decade in 1999, according to the Retail Council of Canada. About 60 per cent of the independent merchants surveyed by the Toronto-based industry organization said last shoppers spent 18 per cent more than in the 1998 holiday season. Other reports indicated that department stores also fared well. December sales at the Bay rose by more than 10 per cent over 1998's level.

## Getting a voice

Terraviva Fund II LLC, a private equity fund associated with the Toronto-based Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, is part of an investment group that paid between \$219 million and \$234 million for seven weekly U.S. newspapers. Not known among them is *The Village Voice*, a New York City-based extension that defied alternative journalism in the 1960s.

## Ruing a rogue trader

TrueCanada Pipelines Ltd. says it is the victim of a rogue trader, losing \$71 million through a senior employee who sold U.S. currency derivatives subsidiary Pan-Alberta Gas Ltd., Calgary-based TCM, North American largest pipeline company, has filed a lawsuit against Enns & Young, Pan-Alberta's auditors, to recover the money, alleging the accounting firm was negligent, a charge it denies.

## Top U.S. banker says on

Alan Greenspan—the 73-year-old Republican economist and a Wall Street darling for helping pilot the U.S. economy to what will soon be an inflation expansion in history—agreed to President Bill Clinton's request that he stay on for a fourth four-year term as chairman of the Federal Reserve Board.

## A growing online business

Chapters Online Inc., majority owned by Canada's largest bookstore chain, said it will buy Montreal-based Web site *GardenCity.com* for about \$1.8 million. The move will expand Chapters' current Web offerings of books, CDs, videos and DVDs, and electronics into the garden supplies market.



## Ross Laver

# Take them money and run.com

Tired of hearing about all those 23-year-old billionaires who co-own a run-up have gone public? All those has-been MBAs who are placing orders for executive jets simply because they and they alone are ordered. America's depressed need for a Web site that provides discounted per food? If so, you'll be glad to learn that in the new millennium dawn, all is not well in the birthplace of high-tech. Silicon Valley is seething, a suffering crisis of confidence.

The cause of the malaise is really quite simple. Apparently there's just too much money sloshing around in the Internet economy. And now that every third person in northern California is, or is poised to become, a silicon millionaire, a growing number of them are finding empty and depressed.

You know the feeling. Or maybe you don't. But don't take my word for it. Have a look at the January issue of *Red Herring*, the glossy, San Francisco-based magazine that bills itself as the bible of the technology biz. "For love or money?" the cover asks, adding "Silicon Valley used to care more about innovation than getting rich. No longer." Accompanying the text is a photo-album of Scott Branson, the beach founder of online retailer Buy.com, sitting naked on a throne, shielding his privates with fists of \$100 bills.

The image isn't pretty, but neither is the magazine's assessment of the tech industry's current state. Since the invention of the semiconductor in the late 1940s, Silicon Valley has prided itself on being the world's most fertile breeding ground for revolutionary technology. When Steve Wozniak designed the first Apple computer in 1976, his goal was to get rich or launch a Fortune 500 company. He just wanted to have fun and impress the guys down at the local computer club. Later, he built the Apple II—the forerunner of all modern personal computers—and gave it a colour screen mainly so he could play a colour version of an Atari video game called *Breakout*.

That's the way a lot of tech companies got started. The idea came first. Commercial success was of secondary importance, a faraway byproduct of inspired engineering. Not for nothing did Robert X. Cringely call his 1992 history of the computer industry *Acidental Empire*. The founders of that industry, Cringely wrote, were academics and pencil-necked nerds who "had no idea how businesses were supposed to be run" but fell in love with digital technology and the idea of building their own computers. Marketing, sales strategies,

initial public offerings (IPOs) and stock options—all that grown-up, business school stuff—came later, when it turned out that millions of people wanted to buy those machines.

That may be how things used to work, but it's not how Silicon Valley operates today. Thanks to the largest boom, the tech industry has attracted a new breed of entrepreneurs—Scott Branson being a high-profile example—driven not by a love of clever engineering but by the desire to make a killing in the stock market. "It's like not caring about the industry from inside," says Richard Barnes, a veteran U.S. venture capitalist and one of the industry experts quoted by *Red Herring*. "People aren't getting real job satisfaction. They're trying

to get rich, and they think it's their God-given right to get rich." Adds the magazine: "The level of greed in high-tech is reaching dangerous proportions."

It's an odd message coming from a publication whose very purpose is to celebrate the wealth-creating potential of high-tech. (In *Wall Street* parlance, a hard landing is a preliminary prospectus, a document distributed to investors by a company that is going up to go public.) But all the hand-wringing isn't motivated solely by nostalgia for a more innocent time. As the magazine points out, there are hard-nosed business reasons to be worried about the greed-quack mania that affects many Internet start-ups. With so much money focused

on the potential for quick profits, very little money is being invested in long-term research of the sort that produces truly revolutionary breakthroughs.

At the same time, companies are finding it increasingly difficult to hang on to good employees. A popular practice in which known as "mini-bopping," jumping their start-up to start-up as to accumulate stock options in a variety of dozen firms. Often, the founders themselves are among the first to cash in and hop to the next opportunity—switching old-timers such as Microsoft Corp. chairman Bill Gates would move how done. Gates waited 11 years before selling his company public in 1986, by which point it had compiled an enviable track record of rising revenues and earnings. Today, many of the Web businesses that go public have been in business for less than three years, are swimming in red ink and have little prospect of ever making a profit.

Not that it matters much to the insiders who are making millions from those IPOs. But in the process of reminding the economy, has Silicon Valley run around to soul?



Shan as cover boy, a new breed

## SEARCHING THE WANT ADS

Annual percentage change in the help-wanted index for December



## Steppin' out of the past

Singer Joe Jackson chronicles the stages of his life and career

**Throughout a career** that began when he was just 16, singer-songwriter Joe Jackson has carved out a reputation as an eclectic artist. And his two latest projects keep him in that vein. In his recently published autobiography *A Grief for Gentry: A Memoir of Myself*, 45-year-old Jackson dishes up a wry account of his life as an aspiring musician in Portsmouth, England. The book commodes with his newest recording, *Symphony No. 1*, which draws on influences from Gertrude to Beethoven and is divided into four movements to reflect the stages of life—childhood, youth, middle and old age.

Of writing the memoir, Jackson says: "It was pure enjoyment, honestly. No one was expecting a book from me as I had no pressure at all." *A Grief for Gentry* is sprinkled with humorous anecdotes, such as one curious gig in a watering hole south of London where a woman doled Jackson with a drink he returned the favor and then he and the band had to flee. But Jackson also writes of his passion for music, which he believes saved him from a dismal life. "I could have gotten into all sorts of trouble," he says. "I could be sleeping in a cardboard box."

Joe Jackson, whose best-selling records include *Night and Day* with his 1982 hit single "Steppin' Out," writing a symphony is something he has



wanted to do since he was a teenager. And he no longer worries about alienating fans by trying on different styles. "It doesn't start from trying to figure out what people want and then giving it to them," Jackson explains of the musical process. "I think it should start from me doing something that I'm excited about."

*Jackson writing the book was "pure enjoyment"*

## Making it in Music City

**Canadian new country singer Stacey Myers** was just 17 the first time she visited Nashville, but she knew it was where she wanted to be. "I literally got off the bus, kissed the ground and said, 'Someday I'm going to live here,'" she recalls. And three days, the 32-year-old does, in fact, live and work in Music City, U.S.A.—although she took a circuitous route getting there. Born into a musical family in Moncton, N.B.—her father, Gerry, was one of the Bushouse Boys, a popular Maritime act in the 1950s and '60s—Myers has performed since she was 3. In 1988, she



*Myers fulfilling a longtime dream*

won the \$100,000 Canadian Country Music Association's Budweiser Talent Search. It did not give her career the expected boost, however, and Myers

continued to tour as a popular, if unheralded, bar band.

But in 1995, former New Brunswicker Peter Lagarde caught Myers' act and made her an offer: let his Nashville-based management firm groom her for stardom. She accepted and the move clearly paid off. Her 1997 CD *Let It Rain* spawned four hit singles—and caught the attention of Keith Olsen, the producer of such top acts as Fleetwood Mac and Santana. He produced her newest CD, *There Will Come a Day*, which is now working its way up the Canadian charts. And in March, the bilingual singer will release *Stacey Myers en français* in francophone communities. "It's amazing," says Myers, "what blood, faith and trust can do."

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# Finding true love in L.A.

Douglas Coupland gets unapologetically romantic

## Miss Wyoming

By Douglas Coupland  
Random House, 311 pages, \$32.95

When the media appropriated the tale of Douglas Coupland's first novel, 1991's *Generation X*, and stuck it to a crop of alienated twentysomething malins, the stage was set for his doom: true pop-culture obscurity. The young Vancouver writer seemed destined to be known for his pose, not his prose. Coupland artfully avoided that fate. In the six best-selling books that followed his debut he honed his craft while experimenting with narrative structure and voice. He also continued to prove, most notably with *Motocross* (1995) and *Firefired in a Gaze* (1998), that he was plugged in to the mind-set of young people coming of age in a digital world. All the while, Coupland kept his very brand-conscious wit sharpened.

The 38-year-old author's latest novel, *Miss Wyoming*, is his best. Equal parts love story and absurdist parable, a seamlessly merges Coupland's trademark ironic detachment with an erudite romanticism that has been absent from his previous work. The confidence and humor of Coupland's prose engages the mind while the unadorned yearning of his characters hooks the heart.

*Miss Wyoming* tells the tale of two wayward Hollywood rejects: 28-year-old Susan Colgate—the "woman on a magnetic cover"—a former beauty pageant winner and washed-up 1980s teen-music star, and John Johnson, a "really handsome" 37-year-old movie producer with a taste for drugs and kinky sex and with "one simple hole in his life"—the incapacity to love. Each



The author, trademark irony and the tale of two wayward Hollywood rejects

character awakens from the hypnosis of modern life and decides to begin again.

John's rebirth is sparked by Susan's voice, which he hears coming from a TV while he is in hospital with a near-fatal bout of flu. Hallucinating, he imagines her telling him to "clean your duct," and he decides to give away all his possessions and become homeless. Susan, meanwhile, survives a plane crash and then disappears into an anonymous existence. Susan and John are both searching for *feeling*, not meaning, and their emotions click into gear after they have a chance meeting at a Los Angeles restaurant. "I want to see you again so badly I think I'm going blind," John tells Susan's answering machine.

*Miss Wyoming*'s characters are in almost constant motion, and Coupland uses their yearning to construct a moral hierarchy out of movement. In the author's view, the speed of modern transportation has helped alienate people from themselves. The most low-tech mode of travel, the most enlightenment is possible. John's time spent homeless and relatively immobile makes him realize he must connect with others. John and Susan fall in love while walking the streets of Los Angeles.

Coupland displays a fine sense of ironic detail. Marilyn, Susan's mother,

attempts to increase the value of her family's house by drawing the measure-acres of a fake broad of children on a doorway. "Add \$K to the asking price," she sneers. A former weatherman keeps a list of things that would annoy people living a century earlier, including the fact that "we went to the moon and to Mars a few times and there's really nothing there except rocks, so we quit dreaming about them."

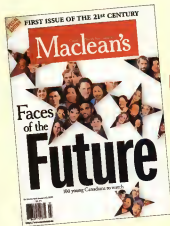
*Miss Wyoming* represents a turn away from cold modernism. Its blend of moral symbolism and high romance is reminiscent of E. Scott Fitzgerald. In fact, there are reflections of Fitzgerald's finest work, *The Great Gatsby*, throughout. *Miss Wyoming* James Gatz destroys his identity in order to become Jay Gatsby; Susan and John mask artificial selves to become more authentic. Fitzgerald also used travel as a metaphor for the destructive nature of modern life. But unlike Gatsby, *Miss Wyoming* is not the story of characters undone by the American Dream. It is the story of people born into that dream who awaken to its limitations. In Gatsby, romantic love is the engine that drives the illusion. In *Miss Wyoming*, it is the sun that clears the mist.

Andrew Clark

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# Postcards from the edges

A gallery of mavericks who get their hands dirty for a living

## Working the Land

By David Cruise and Alison Griffiths  
Penguin, 350 pages, \$35

While the majority of Canadians live in bustling cities not far from the American border, there is, for many, a nagging suspicion that the heart of the country beats elsewhere. In their latest book, profile authors (and longtime married couple) David Cruise and Alison Griffiths savor that suspicion with a series of vignettes about people who make a living on Canada's edges, whether as trappers in the Yukon, diamond sleuths in the Northwest Territories or potato farmers on Prince Edward Island. "What concerns these disparate individuals is the sense of freedom they enjoy. Lunch Curry, a 73-year-old Yukoner who has been trapping since she was six years old, puts it succinctly: "I like cooking. I like housework. I'd rather spend days in the bush than thinking about washing a dish."

The authors help to shed light on such exploits as the diamond rush that began on the banks of the Northwest Territories in the early 1990s. At its height, more than 150 mining companies staked out a staggering 60 million acres. The culmination of all this activity was the opening, in October, 1998, of the Ekati mine, which has earned Canada into the fourth-largest diamond producer in the world (a second diamond mine is set to open in the region in 2003).

Cruise and Griffiths track down famed guns like Nick Pohlenko, 51, a Siberian native who is described as "one of the two or three best diamond finders in the world." The ebullient Pohlenko, who has prospered at the age along with his golfing wife, Lucy, since 1994, has an uncanny ability to spot and extract potential diamond sources—using, among other things, a banister wooden pin to sift for diamond dust in gold panes dug a century ago. "Candid, that's a Stridbrunn," Pohlenko cautions as he hands the pin over for Cruise's inspection. In his off-hours, Pohlenko can be found



Griffiths (left), Cruise: sense of freedom

hanging out on the sand or catching fish to roast over an open fire.

The authors also introduce us to Rajinder Singh Lilly, whom they dub "the Berry King" of British Columbia's Fraser Valley. Lilly, who emigrated from India to Canada as a young man in 1973, is one of several Sikh farmers who have brought up large tracts of land in the valley. Lilly's berry-picking plant employs up to 50 people—most of

them fellow Sikhs—and is the second-largest in the province. Over six feet tall and with brooding eyes, Lilly is an object of both envy and scorn among his neighbours, some of whom rail against the "frivolous kingdome" they say he has created on the backs of hard-working, low-paid employees. Lilly, the father of two teenage sons, cautions that he gives hard-pressed families a chance to earn a living together. He also says he finds spiritual fulfillment in a job that preoccupies him seven days a week. "You don't have to do certain things to feel God," he explains. "It's in the nature, in the land. You feel it everywhere."

One of the book's most humorous sections finds Cruise gamely following Porcho Rudniko, 42, of Dawson, Yukon, on an all-day snowmobile tour of his 135-km long trapping loop. "Let's boogie," says an exuberant Rudniko as he leads Cruise from trap to trap—only to find that many of them have been tripped by wily voles which have snatched away his meat to lure marmots. After darkness descends, Cruise's snowmobile runs out of gas. Rudniko, who has driven blithely ahead, does not realize at first that Cruise is stranded. It takes two hours on this -20C night before the bemused scribe is finally retrieved.

Along the way, readers are treated to lessons in planting potatoes, setting traps—seen a disservice on the history of the cranberry. But the conventional tone of the prose sometimes borders on the trite. During such lapses a diamond hunter drops into a Twin Otter aircraft "before you could my Elizabeth Taylor" and a beagle meowing is described as "dressed up like a girl aiming to get lucky and leaving nothing to chance." Fortunately, the cast of characters assembled by Cruise and Griffiths more than compensates for the occasional chuckle. As these postcards from the edges attest, Canada's hinterlands—and its people—remain as compelling as ever.

Brian Bergman

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Allan Fotheringham

## Dateline Machu Picchu

Some years ago, a young Montreal fester sent a postcard from Machu Picchu. All it said was "This is where I will be married some day." Having finally seen Machu Picchu, high in the Peruvian Andes—on this present wandering path through Rio, Buenos Aires, the Falklands, Antarctica, Chile and now Peru—the fester must agree with her sentiments.

Those jaded eyes have seen the Great Wall of China, the Parthenon and all the ruins of Rome and Israel, and the pyramids. There is nothing to compare with this marvellous hidden civilization of the Incas, tucked 2,000 m high in cloud-shaded cliffs, a gem unknown until this man (i.e., this last one) century.

Francisco Pizarro, an illiterate pig farmer, conquered Peru with just 50 horsemen and 105 soldiers from Spain. And he never did know, even when he was assassinated in 1541, that Machu Picchu ever existed—estimates date it from the 15th century—in the land where he vowed to eradicate any trace of the "pagan Inca civilization."

Not that it's exactly easy to reach, even today. It's an hour's flight east from Lima, along-filled Lapa on the Pacific coast, and then a grueling two-hour train trip into the Andes. It's worth every inch of it.

Everyone knew when Lord Elgin was packing off that marble from the Acropolis and was showing it in the British Museum (Greece won't let it back in time for the 2004 Olympic Games). There's a debate now rising about African war-torn but art work long removed by North American collectors that it wasn't until "recently"—1911—that Hiram Bingham, a Yale University professor-explorer and later U.S. senator, stumbled upon Machu Picchu. He was led to it by an Indian peasant, no secret all those years hidden by the jungle growth that had completely covered it. The arrogant Spanish conquistadors didn't know it was there, just as the arrogant British could never figure out Gandhi. History plays strange tricks.

There has been the usual de-Stalinization of Bingham, various academics and explorers claiming they were there before him. But it was Bingham who brought the place to world knowledge and fame. Leading to the horrific suggestion that Hitler and Hyatt and the rest want to build up there and the Ocean-Engross people argue that a cable car would ruin the ambience.

There are now discoveries of signs of a pre-Inca occupation going back 2,000 years. Those Heyerdahl, the Norwegian

explorer who attempted to prove with his 1947 raft journey that the Polynesian Islands were first populated from South America, is here at the moment looking for further proof. One wonders he is not mimicking Hitler.

It's a cliché by now, but no amount of reading about Machu Picchu or viewing endless fascinating photographs of it, can prepare the innocent visitor for the first view. On top of a steep peak—an 11-km hike if you are a backpacker—the remarkably preserved ruins stretch for almost a kilometre. One supposes the jungle growth, like a cooping vine, preserved them.

The sophisticated Inca civilization had a water system for the city that contained an estimated 1,000 inhabitants, irrigation on impossibly steep cliffs that provided terraces for the crops that kept the people alive.

None among civilizations of that age, they never needed the wheel. Because there would be no use for it on peaks that went only up and down. How did they get all those rocks up there? Nobody knows. Why was construction of the city abandoned—before the Spanish arrived? Nobody knows.

What one does know is the difficulties the dumb traveller discovers in even trying to imitate the tracks of these remarkable people. Everyone is warned to make at least a two-day stop, after the plane flight, in Cuzco—base for the train travel—to adjust for altitude sickness.

It's at 3,300 m, even higher than Machu Picchu, and you have been warned. Elderly, rich American tourists, energetically seeking souvenirs, suddenly grow weak in the knees and stagger about in the thin air, now knowing what it is like inhaling heavy rock.

Cuzco is no magnificent as Lima is disappointing. When Pizarro arrived five centuries ago with weapons that the Incas had never seen and could not counter, Cuzco was the capital of the Inca empire, site of an estimated 15,000 nobles, priests and servants. Prior to 1536, there were an estimated 200,000 inhabitants. The empire stretched to what is now Ecuador, Bolivia, Colombia, Chile and parts of Argentina.

The Inca remains are the most impressive stop in South America. Last year the Dalai Lama announced that in 2,000 the world's "energy" will be transferred from the Himalayas to the Andes. And at home we worry about the West of Pirene Manning.

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